



**CHRIST**  
**UNIVERSITY**  
BANGALORE, INDIA

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# ANTHOLOGY OF WORLD LITERATURES



MA IN ENGLISH WITH COMMUNICATION STUDIES

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

CHRIST UNIVERSITY, BANGALORE, INDIA.

2011-13

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## FOREWORD

“Anthology of World Literatures” is a laudable initiative. It is a perfect fusion of the creative and critical faculties of young minds that is absolutely necessary and crucial to a learning environment. In a growing and an extremely heterogeneous university such as Christ University, the attempt to bring together literatures and art forms of varied cultures and kinds assumes all the more importance as it is not only a reflection of the composition of the university but its core culture as well. Christ University appreciates differences, values diversities and celebrates pluralities. In a globalized context the need for recognizing multiplicities is ever increasing and this anthology, in that sense, reiterates that need and positively confirms its relevance.

The four divisions of the anthology are dedicated to specific regions: East Asian, Middle Eastern, European, and Beyond Borders. Almost all art forms, some well known and many not so well known, have been included that make the anthology look comprehensive and wholesome. From Ikebana, Tanka and Zen of the East Asian, Mehndi and Ghazal of the Middle Eastern, Acrostic poetry and Quilling of the European to Graffiti and Cha Cha of the Beyond Borders- the journey is both long and exhilarating to a connoisseur of literature and arts. The interesting pattern that the anthology has employed, that is to introduce the art form first before demonstrating it, will surely help readers understand its nuances and appreciate the form better. The anthology has several voices . . . each of these voices is powerful, significant and beautiful in its own ways. I congratulate the Postgraduate students of English with Communication Studies on this meaningful academic engagement and I also earnestly wish that the objectives of this project are realized soon.

P John J Kennedy  
Head, Department of English  
Dean, Humanities and Social Sciences

## INTRODUCTION

Reading World Literatures is a challenge. How does one perceive the contours of this globe with a singular gaze? How much of a region can be appropriated, what will be obliterated in the process? Who decides that?

“What I assume, you shall assume” is Art? Who is this Artist that roams the world, singing songs that tell of saddest thought? We desist from the temptation to view the adventure as a mere economy world package tour. Rather than transcend perceived boundaries of land and the mind painting pictures on a vast bland sky, I believe world literatures delve deep into the soil of the human condition, burrowing through dark subterranean regions of the soul, where the deep secrets lie untold.

The World Literatures paper of the II MA English with Communication Studies programme afforded such a soul searching quest. I'm proud of you, young writers, as you plunged into your depths, tasted distant lands and ventured into the exhilarating world of Art.

Shobana P Mathews

Programme Coordinator

MA in English with Communication Studies

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Speaking to his young disciple Johann Peter Eckermann in 1827, the seventy-seven year-old Goethe remarked, "I am more and more convinced... national literature is now a rather unmeaning term: the epoch of world literature is at hand, and everyone must strive to hasten its approach." The study of the literatures of the world has now gained more prominence than ever before. The simplest way of defining World Literature is literature that has a readership and an impact beyond its original language and cultural area.

Every good literature reaches out beyond its own time and place. Literature has become a mouth for many worlds to express their unique culture. Every work reflects the world of its origin and our appreciation of that work can be enormously increased if we learn the socio-cultural background of the work.

The Master of Arts in English and Communication Studies at Christ University Bangalore has rightly included the study of world literature in the course with a definite purpose. Besides exploring and understanding the works of a variety of literary traditions in its cultural and historical contexts, the study was meant to articulate one's understanding of the course into practicality by producing an art form of one's choice. This amounted to an in-depth study of the art form and its background and expresses it creatively within the prescribed genre.

This anthology is the creative expressions of the students of literature as part of the study of world literature. What makes the anthology so unique is that the contributors recognized that there is more to literature than simply poetry and fiction, and they have looked beyond those privileged genres. The book consists of various art forms from diverse worlds such as European, Middle Eastern, East Asian and other regions. With a short introduction to the respective art form, followed by the creative reproduction of the artwork, the anthology is designed to be both enjoyable to read and profitable in terms of learning.

A special word of thanks to Prof. John Joseph Kennedy, the Head of the Department of English, for writing a pertinent foreword! We would like to thank Ms. Shobana Mathews for her untiring support and scholarly guidance in making this dream come true. We would also like to extend our gratitude to Mr. Jeremy Savio D'Cruz for his unwavering support. We thank Fr. Biju, of the Department of Media Studies at Christ University, for sharing his technical knowledge, and for familiarizing us with the nuances of online publications. Our sincere thanks to Dr. Anil Pinto, the Head of Publication Department of Christ University for his advice and technical assistance in bringing this publication out online!

As Salman Rushdie once pointed out, the world of literature is also the one place 'in any society where, within the secrecy of our own heads, we can hear voices talking about everything in every possible way.' The vitality and new horizons offered by these voices are revealed in this anthology. Happy reading!

The Students of MA in English with Communication Studies  
Christ University, Bangalore

2011-13

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# E A S T A S I A N



# I N T R O D U C T I O N

*Poonam Vaidya*

The art, literature and performances of the glorious and colourful world of the Orient await you in our East Asian section of this book. Don your kimonos as we set off towards the ‘Land of the Rising Sun’, Japan, and the other, equally fascinating Archipelago, Indonesia. Malaysia is not far behind.

Receiving considerable influences from the countries of India, China and the European subcontinent, as well as the religions of Hinduism and Buddhism, these countries have been able to integrate and model their forms of art, so that it might cater to tradition as well as adapt to the other, rapidly changing modern influences. The three do a remarkable job of keeping art rooted, yet relevant.

Pictocentric right from its writing style, the Japanese forms of manga, Ikebana and origami are a visual treat, creating aesthetic and tangible pleasure using common raw materials like pencils, paper and flowers. Not far behind are the literary forms, the Tanka, Haiku, Zen Poetry and Senryu. Though all written down, these forms of poetry attempt to ‘create pictures out of words’, providing a counter discourse to the textually-obsessed hegemonic western ideology with which most of the world operates. Poetry forms like the haiku emerged from the ‘haiku masters’ of the seventeenth century, Matsuo Bashō (1644–1694) and Ueshima Onitsura (1661–1738), whose names are widely popular around the world. Manga is read by almost everyone in Japan, and consists of forty percent of all its published content. Origami and Ikebana are also worlded art forms, which require creativity and encourage alternative ways of thinking. From Indonesia, we will look at the craft work of using shells. This innovative and creativity-enducing art form will leave you rummaging for those sea shells you collected on your last trip to the beach.

You can’t say ‘Malaysia’ without ‘Asia’. Vent your emotions with the Malaysian poetic form of the Pantun, with thought-provoking binaries that will leave you feeling uplifted and humbled at the same time.



## IKEBANA

Margrett Abraham

God has created nature perfectly and beautifully. Everyone enjoys the beauty and fragrance of flowers. It attracts everyone and when it is arranged in different styles it reflects the creativity of its producer. Ikebana is an ancient Japanese art of 'Flower Arrangement', which has been practiced for fourteen hundred years. It is an art form in which nature and humanity are brought together. It is an art form because it follows certain rules, styles and methods in order to achieve perfect harmony, beauty and balance.

In the 7th century along with the emergence of Buddhism in Japan, this art form also has come with the Buddhist practice. This art form developed from the Buddhist ritual of offering flowers to the spirits of the dead. In the beginning the teachers and students were from among the Buddhist priests and members. But later on many other schools emerged, styles changed, and Ikebana became a practice in the Japanese society. Though there are many schools of Ikebana the most popular ones are Ikenobo, Sogetsu and Ohara. There are also diverse styles depending on the school and the plants and vase used.

The first of the modern schools was formed when Ohara Unshin broke from the Ikenobo School in the late 19th century. The Ohara School generally uses *moribana* (piled-up flowers) in a shallow, flat container. The artistic movement of the early 20th century led to the expansion of *jiyuka* (free-style) arrangement. It is a free creative design. It is not confined to flowers but also includes materials like plastic, paper, dry and branches can be used. Ikebana also has a spiritual aspect in expressing living nature aesthetically.

My productions are mainly of cascading, freestyle, and arrangement for the dining table. In the free-style I have used a green color vase, a flower pin, a rose flower and three main leaves cutting it in to different shapes and modifying it from the original. It was produced to place at the altar and it would raise the heart of a viewer towards the God.

My second production is meant for the dining table. A tall glass is used as the material for the vase. In this a rose flower is placed within the glass, and a hibiscus is seen above it. This style of arrangement can be viewed from any side. As it occupies less space the items on the table can be arranged well. The colors can be changed based on the settings of the room and table. In these works, I used flowers available at my own garden. I could make use of the natural materials and fresh flowers available in my surroundings but I could not have choice of different types of flowers, choice of color and shape. As it is performed in silence it brings peace of mind and harmony with nature.

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*Ikebana, arranged by Margrett*

## TANKA

*Neha Dhawan*

Tanka is a Japanese poetic form that has existed for more than 1300 years. Tanka is an unrhymed verse form of thirty-one syllables following the pattern of 5-7-5-7-7 syllables (*Sanjuichi* pattern) which provides rhythm to the form. It has no title. Brevity is the soul of Tanka. It makes use of a lot of stereotypes as they help in adding layers to the poem in minimum words. As both English and Japanese are very different languages, a lot more is conveyed in 31 syllables in English as compared to Japanese. So, anything from 12 to 31 syllables is acceptable when it is written in English.

Tanka has two important aspects : *Yūgen* (mystery) and *Miyabi* (good taste). *Yūgen* (mystery) means that poem offers an empty space for the reader to explore. Tanka is largely objective. *Miyabi* refers to the presence of beauty in Tanka. The poem deals with elegant themes; it is never gross. Tanka like a sonnet has a pivotal turn or twist. This turn appears in the last two lines. It is generally done by juxtaposition of two different images or one image and response. It explores imagism at its best. Tanka is written on themes like nature, seasons, love, celebrations and mourning.

The earliest Japanese anthology is the mid eighth century *Man'yōshū* comprised 4,173 poems are written in Tanka form. *Waka* soon emerged as the poetry of imperial court. By the end of 12th Century poets started experimenting with *Waka* (Tanka) and other forms like *renga*, *hokku* and *kyōka*, *chōka*, *sedōka* and *katauta* emerged. During the Meiji Restoration of 1868, Western poetry came into Japan. It gave stimulus to Japanese Literary tradition. *Tekkan* and *Akiko*, *Masaoka Shiki*, *Ishikawa Takuboku*, and a mass of avant-garde tanka poets brought about a lot of modernist experimentation to Tanka.

The oldest known book of English-language Tanka, entitled *Tanka*, by *Ida Henrietta Bean* was published in London, UK, in 1899 by *F. T. Neely*. *Sadakichi Hartmann* and *Jun Fujita* (both of Japanese origin) popularized Tanka in North America in 20th Century. Tanka flourished in America irrespective of the anti-Japan sentiment prevalent during World War II. There are various Tanka circles in Hawaii, California, Los Angeles, Washington, Toronto and Montreal. Recently, Tanka has established itself through various journals, online forums, and contests.

I have experimented with *sanjuichi* pattern in Tanka written by me. Some of the poems follow the conventional *sanjuichi* pattern while others do not. The syllables used also vary within the range of 12 to 31. The poems use a lot of images also. Most of the poems also have the pivotal turn. The twist generally appears in the last two lines of Tanka. The themes explored include love, nature, season and nostalgia.

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**I**

The summer passed  
 With all its blossoms and bees  
 Winter appeared  
 Drained love, life and delight  
 When warmth was all she needed

**II**

Hues of grey and brown  
 Contrasting snow capped hills  
 Icy azure waters  
 Mirrors white clouds on blue sky  
 Reality peeps through canvas

**III**

Hot coconut oil  
 Green chilies and mustard seeds  
 Intoxicating  
 Aroma of curry leaves  
 All cooked in his fancies

**IV**

Starry night

Lone boat

Serene Lake

Lady leaps

Ripples

**V**

Rains and Rainbows

Shower the love

Monsoon darling

Its time to come

And start afresh

**VI**

Only if color

Could define love

It would be

Black

Rainbow pastel mingle

**VII**

Purple orange sky

Gazing at sea

The boats sail

But without me

Nostalgia!



## MANGA

Poonam Vaidya

Manga is a Japanese term that generally means "comics" or "cartoons", literally "whimsical sketches" (Wikipedia) They are printed comics found in graphic-novel, usually in black and white, and are read from right to left. It is essential to connect and distinguish manga from anime. To put it very simply, "anime could be considered a kind of animated manga."

Most critics of manga suggest that the beginnings of the form go back at least to the Edo period (600 to 868) , and some see its origins even earlier, in the Zen cartoons of the medieval period and the witty animal scrolls of the tenth century. Certainly Edo period works have images that appear to have direct links to both manga and anime, particularly with the *Hibyoshi*, illustrated books with an often humorous or erotic content, and the woodblock prints known as *Uhiyoe*, which featured not only actors and courtesans of the demimonde but, as time went on, increasingly grotesque and imaginative subjects. Critics of manga history have described wide-ranging and parallel processes influencing modern manga.

One perspective emphasizes events occurring during and after the U.S. Occupation of Japan (1945-1952), and stresses U.S. cultural influences, whereas the other stresses continuity of Japanese cultural and aesthetic traditions as central to the history of manga, citing the first manga scrolls as *Choju-jinbutsu-giga* and *Shigisan-engi* that told stories in sequential images. Manga remains faithful to the Japanese style of communication as well as Japanese culture, which is a largely pictocentric culture that equates visual elements in the text with the textual elements, often also bringing in an auditory element with the use of homonyms and onomatopoeia. Readers of manga have grown accustomed to interacting with the text in several ways, leading to truly 'out of the box' thinking and a more diverse and multidimensional perspective of reading stories. A flexible and universal art form, it is no wonder that manga has transformed itself into something that can be tailored for everybody, whether based on age, sex, culture or interest.

The art form of manga that I have created would technically be called a *Dijinshi*. *Dijinshi* is a term that is used to refer to manga and anime that have been drawn by amateur artists or fans. *Dijinshi* manga has the potential to enter the main stream and become anime.

'Where is Taku?', the *Dijinshi* manga that I have created is essentially a one-shot. It focuses on a young girl., Fiyumi Nakazawa, who loses her cat, and hyperventilates, thinking that he is dead. Her brother, Ha-rima Nakazawa, offers to look for the cat. He looks everywhere in and around the house, and also peeks into his neighbor, Midori's house, and ends up seeing her changing. He is then thrown out by Midori and returns home, dejected. While he is working up the nerve to reveal the bad news to his sister, he sees her playing with the cat. Angered, he yells out her name. She turns, 'sweat drops', and then, in the classic *kawaii*

style (meaning cute) says, "Sorry."

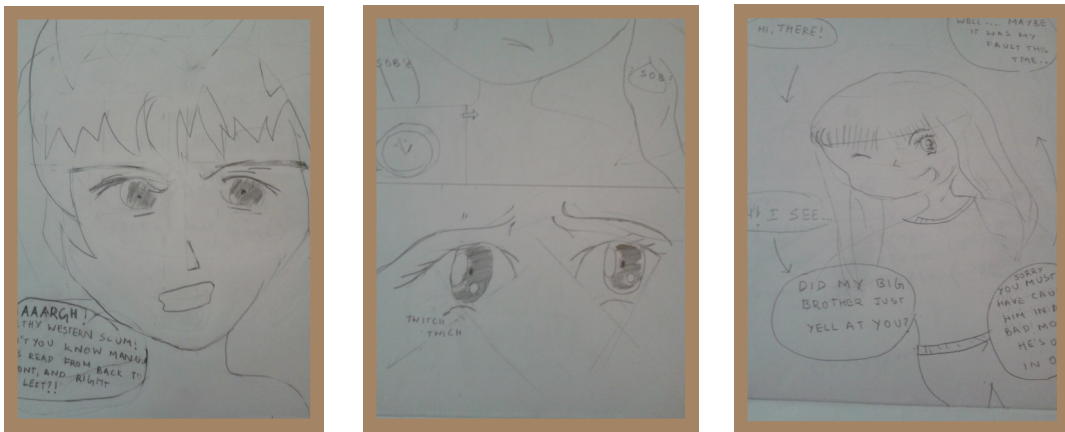
Like all amateur diginshi, the execution of this manga is not as professional as I'd hoped it would be. The manga focuses on several emotions- sadness, doubt, panic, happiness, sexual desire, anger, shock, surprise and several more, if not directly conveyed, then are indirectly portrayed with the traditional manga tropes, like 'crying buckets', 'sweat drops', different font styles and 'the vacant' look that characters sport when in difficult situations.

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*“Where is Taku”*: Manga by Poonam Vaidya





## SENRYU

*Reshma S*

Senryu is an unrhymed Japanese poem of three lines, dealing with human nature, commonly having an ironic or satiric streak in it. It is similar to Haiku, having 5-7-5 syllable structure. Its common feature lies on emphasizing human foibles usually with a critical perspective. The art form is named after Karai Senryu, a Maekuzuke master in the 18th century. The major characteristics of Japanese Senryu are *okashimi* (humour), *ugachi* (insightful and penetrating observation), and *karumi* (light heartedness) but these are not the indispensable constituents in all Senryu.

Following is an attempt to reproduce the aforementioned art form and efforts towards the process of ‘worlding’, though it may not be as refined as the traditional Senryu. Examining the world with a sharp and satirical eye and critiquing the human nature is the chief motive of this production.

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## STRUGGLE

He falls and it hurts  
 Life's strife hardens the core  
 Lessons burned in stone

## DISGUST

Red wrath, fill the eyes  
 Heart drips black and red, loath all,  
 Ferocious villain.

**EARTH'S MALADY**

Gorging on earth  
The leechlike rapist  
Man-kind, earth's malady.

**SHAM**

Fake smiles muddle up  
Through forked tongues usher pretense  
Heart full of foul stench.

**JEALOUSY**

The green eyed monster  
Bleeds forth within, hail the hell  
The vicious envy



## IKEBANA

### *Sadhana Shanbhag*

The Indian practice of placing flowers at the feet of Hindu deities imbibed itself into Buddhist religious culture. As Buddhism grew, so did this practice of placing flowers, which drew in influences from different countries of Southeast Asia. Ikebana traces its history from around 700 AD when Chinese monks started offering flowers, and this slowly developed as an art form. These flower decorations started out primarily to decorate the altar of Buddha and later became non religious. Soon, over a period with the development of different schools of Ikebana even the general public started this form of flower decoration in their homes.

Even when this form of flower arrangement was used for temple decorations, the priests whose sole responsibility it was, wanted their art to lend and impart meaning to the viewer. Drawing influences from Renaissance and Reformation, Ikebana became more a symbol of expression and individuality through flower arrangement. This process of elucidating meaning through flowers saw the birth of many schools of Ikebana, namely Ikenobo, Shoka, Rikka and Moribana. Each of these schools has specific patterns and designs.

Labelling Ikebana as a form of art could be shocking to many who consider art as something which does not have a shelf life. The final artistic piece agreed, has a short lifespan, yet it is rich in meaning, creativity and provides the viewer with a unique visual experience. Ikebana has diffused into the various countries absorbing and adapting from their culture, religion, art etc.

I have attempted to appropriate a few contexts into this art form by experimenting with patterns from different schools. One arrangement is dedicated to the awareness of breast cancer and supporting survivors. The pink ribbon which stands as a symbol of the breast cancer movement is represented through the pink carnation. Created in the Shoka Style, there are three elements used in the form of *chi* (Earth), *ten* (Heaven) and *juis* (Man). The next context is the current day status of women in India. In present day India, we perceive the status of women as being more independent and towards betterment. The new modern avant-garde form of Ikebana using flowers underwater depicts the actual and true status of women in our country where freedom and equality is nothing but an illusion. The marbles denote rooted customs and the ferns stand for the social institutions which restrain women. The reason of using the flower in water is a reference also to the victims of female infanticide. Many foetuses end up in brine jar bottles. To the eye they seem alive but the mind knows it has no life.

These two forms of Ikebana also show the ‘worlding’ of this art form, from just being a representation of Japan to help throw light on social issues in India.



*Ikebana by Sadhana*

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## ZEN POETRY

*Tara Rachel Thomas*

Zen has its roots in China around the 6th century, where it is said to have drawn from the Indian concept of Dhyana or meditation. In China, Zen started as a method of visual discourse, where Zen monks would create paintings about the Buddha and their followers would observe their unique style and artistic patience as the embodiment of Buddhist principles. Zen Calligraphy passed from China to Japan and was demonstrated in the form of sermons to followers. The sermons drew from Buddhist texts, as well as everyday life. Bodhidharma (528 A.D.), who took the concept of Zen to China, defines it as;

*“Not dependent on the written word,  
Transmission apart from the scriptures;  
Directly pointing at one’s heart,  
Seeing one’s nature, becoming Buddha.”*

Zen Poetry emerged at around this time. While the Indian concept of Dhyana stresses on focused concentration over decades to achieve enlightenment, Zen speaks of a moment of ‘awakening’ or mindfulness that is sudden, offering enlightenment. Zen Poetry too, embodies this spirit of sudden mindfulness and awakening. The style of Zen Poetry is crisp and short, avoiding glossy language.

In the current cultural context, the word ‘Zen’ denotes a certain calmness that is able to look past worldly struggles and trials, and reach a higher plane in the face of great adversaries. A person who is able to tune in to his ‘Zen’ side, will be alert and mindful yet detached from a situation.

While many are of the opinion that art must have a purpose, Zen Poetry is able to achieve the ultimate purpose. The world around us appears to grow increasingly numb and jaded with the overload of information and plethora of images that are forced upon us every day. The art of Zen Poetry offers an immediate, brief and clear respite from these phenomena. Although it might take a reader many years to make sense of these poems and see them as more than mere striking images and philosophical mumbo-jumbo, there is no denying that this time-tested method creates immediate insight and has guided monks, of various orders, to their moment of enlightenment.

Zen Poetry has been embraced across the world, over the past few decades. The Zen monks, Basho, Ikkyu, Ryokan and Bassui amongst others experimented with, and perfected, the art, making it more popular with its derivative, the haiku. The form has spread from Japan to other continents, thus removing its religious connotations and elevating it to something that surpasses religious barriers.

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**I**

He takes out  
from his rice and gravy  
a short black strand of hair  
'Let us take a moment  
to hope  
that our friend isn't balding'  
he says to himself  
and faithfully returns  
To his meal

**II**

Throw out the books  
let go of the mind  
slip away from the crowd  
why not?

**III**

Cold misty morning  
wide open grassland  
fast long steps  
break into a run  
Till you are gasping.

**IV**

My mother told me  
I would end up on the streets  
begging with a utensil  
because i am so lazy

So i picked up a utensil  
and walked into the street  
to beg

**V**

Bustling noisy road  
clogged traffic  
dense smoky air  
old man  
pushes cycle  
gently

**VI**

green tea  
raindrops on the window  
silent thought  
An unexpected rainbow



## ORIGAMI

*Trishna Rai*

The art of paper folding goes back approximately to 17th century AD and gained its popularity in the mid-1900s. Japan gave birth to this art form known as Origami.

In Japanese language, *Ori* means “folding” and *Kami* means “paper”. Since the evolution of origami, it has become one of the modern art forms. The objective of this art is to alter a flat sheet of paper into a finished sculpture through folding and sculpting techniques. One cannot cut or glue the paper to produce a new product, if it is done then it is not considered to be origami, such form of act is known as Kirigami.

Since the evolution of Origami, many Origamists have come out with different types of Origami of which Action Origami, Modular Origami, Wet-folding, Pureland Origami, Origami Tessellations, Kirigami are widely practiced. The modular origami technique is an intriguing one as several individual objects are made and then combined to form a new creation.

The priority for producing a product via folding is that the paper should hold a crease and any laminar material can be used. Origami paper is referred to as ‘kami’ i.e. Japanese for paper. These papers are made in such a way that it is accessible to all and it is light weight at the same time strong ,and the crease is easier and cleaner. The crease outline is the main preparatory for intricate designs as it is important to form the final model.

This art form is appreciated by people of any age. Folding papers also has a lot of benefits therefore this ancient art form still continues to intrigue people all around the world. Over a period of time complex folds have been invented and the numbers of different origami designs that can be made from them are incredible. If the session of origami is conducted in schools than students will learn the importance of sequencing, follow directions, visualization skills, improve motor skills and also helps develop multi-cultural awareness. Origami also is productive in medical approach as it helps in the rehabilitation of hand muscles, arthritic patient and it also helps some people to relieve stress.

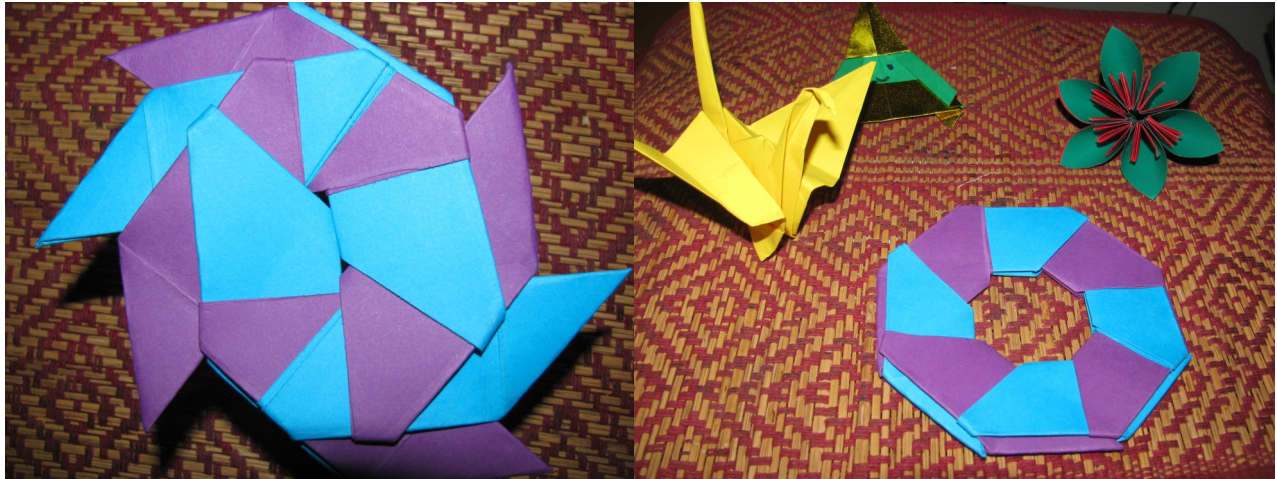
Nevertheless “Origami” was not invented in India and in the foreword to Raja Rao’s *Kantapura* by Raja Rao , he mentions that “we Indians, think quickly, we talk quickly and when we move we move quickly” so one needs to have a lot of patience while doing origami. Origami becomes more complex in today’s world as it is the “hyper-modern era” as creators introducing more complex models with the help of computers to design and locate basic folds in order to create saleable end products. As its origin was in Japan, people who do not belong to that country has to learn via Youtube or instruction books but in Japan, students are taught in the schools and homes and therefore they are encouraged to practice origami.



Still there is no boundary to learn new art forms therefore “Origami” as the art of paper folding is being enjoyed by millions of people all over the world. The wonder of being able to turn a piece of paper into a complex, life-like design is an amazing experience for many people.

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*Origami by Trishna*



## INDONESIAN CRAFT WORK USING SHELLS

*Yukta*

Indonesia is made up of 17,000 islands which gives it a huge access to a large variety of shells. They are formed by the sea animals for the protection of their tender bodies. The shells are made up of Calcium Carbonate ( $\text{CaCO}_3$ ) secreted by the sea animals.

Roman and Greek mythologies believe in shell as a magical representation of success and revival. Using shells for decorative purposes has been in fashion since times immemorial. In the 17th Century collection of shells was a leisure pursuit for the nobility. The trends of working with sea shells continued in the 19th Century and even later.

The photo frames of today were an invention of early times when they were meant to hold the photos of sailors who went sailing for many months. Shells today are used in many forms- decorative jewellery, ashtrays, key chains, paper weights, boxes, decoration of other items like bags and clothes etc. Though the delicate structure of the shells make it a little difficult to handle while making things out of it, they are much in fashion since ever and its beauty would continue to be seen around in everything.

Working with shells and specially making holes in them to create a variety of jewellery and show pieces is a difficult task since the shells are hard to make holes with a pin but too delicate to endure a drill. However, the holes on the shells are created using a drilling machine and one needs to be really careful of the amount of pressure one puts on it.

Also, it is difficult to make a few shells stay in a position without turning. Few shells can be drilled only at one point for aesthetic purposes and hence making them hang straight is difficult. This was realized while embroidering shells on a bag.

Embroidery was also done on a plain black dupatta. But since the shells are heavy to tear a dupatta only a few particular patterns can be experimented with. The shells must be evenly divided on such cloths so that the cloth does not tear.

It is difficult to stick shells on any smooth mirror like surface using simple gum or Fevicol. In addition, a few shells only have one point of its surface projected outwards and the surface area provided to stick the shells on a mirror would automatically become very less.

However, in spite of the difficulties, shells are seen everywhere. The art form is now not restricted to one region but has spread all over the world.

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*Ganesha (Indian Representation) and a Mirror Decoration by Yukta*



## PANTUN

*Anshuman Manur*

The Pantun is a traditional South East Asian poetic form that originated in Malaysia and parts of Indonesia. It was primarily an oral form of poetry and therefore, is seldom recorded in history. In this form, emotions are expressed through spontaneous recitation.

Structurally, the Pantun is a poem with an even number of lines and with an ABAB rhyme scheme (that is, in a quatrain, the first line rhymes with the third and the second with the fourth). But this is not always the case as there are Pantuns that have varying schemes as well. However, the most popular scheme, the Pantun empat kerat, is the four-lined Pantun which would compulsorily employ an ABAB rhyme scheme

What makes the Pantun unique is its duality. The Pantun essentially comprises two components- a concrete part called the *Pembayang Maksud* and the meaning part called *Maksud*. *Pembayang maksud* literally means "shades of meaning," while *Maksud* means "meaning" and *Pembayang* could accurately translate into "hint." To qualify as a Pantun a quatrain must contain two halves which, while rhyming with each other, must bear a thematic disconnect. Yet, the first distich somehow sets the stage for the meaning to be laid out in the second distich. To illustrate with an example:

The mighty eagle and the lowly crow,  
Never will they together soar,  
Your highness now makes haste to go,  
When will we meet once more?

In this Pantun, the first distich somehow hints at the meaning in the second. The allusion to the difference between the "mighty eagle" and the "lowly crow" makes apparent the difference in status between "your highness" and the narrator who seeks another audience like the one that they had probably just had. Without the "hint" in the first distich, the second would have appeared like an ordinary appeal for a meeting. It is the allusion to the eagle and the crow which tells the reader that the narrator acknowledges his inferior status and probably, also brings out his servility and eagerness.

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**I**

Mountain water in a bottle,  
 Animals in a zoo.  
 A smile from you direct at me,  
 How do I know its true?

**II**

A *pipi* and a scrawny cow,  
 Clothed in rags so torn.  
 The phone must stop its buzzing now,  
 She must leave me alone.

**III**

A gentle stream is like a song,  
 But roaring floods are cruel.  
 What really feels, she feels too strong,  
 She can't say, its not cool.

**IV**

To drive the car on one-way streets,  
 Will get you cursed and penalties.  
 A day so hot I'd never seen,  
 The streets I'll walk in my undies.

**V**

The cheetah runs quite near the speed of sound,  
 While dolphins leap so high and make a dive.  
 A fat and slothful merchant's homeward bound,  
 To eat his food and long years be alive.



## HAIKU

*Krishnendu Basu*

Haiku was initially called *Hokku*. Its name was given by the Japanese writer Masaoka Shiki in the end of the nineteenth century. Haiku is a short form of Japanese poetry. By the time of Matsuo Bashō (1644–1694), Hokku started appearing as an independent form, and later, Masaoka Shiki renamed all of them as Haiku. Haiku is now inclusive to all Hokku, irrespective of when they were written. Haiku is now famous worldwide. Right from the twentieth century Rabindranath Tagore composed Haiku in Bengali. He translated some Haikus from Japanese too. Zeenabhai Ratanji Desai, in Gujrat, popularized Haiku and remains a popular Haiku writer till date. In February 2008, the World Haiku Festival was held at Bangalore gathering Haiku poets (better known as *haijin*) from India and other places.

A Haiku does not simply convey an idea in the psyche of the author, but shows it. The Haiku is written like a direct question asked. Not conforming to the syllable structure is most common error in writing Haiku. A Haiku is predominantly based on nature. Haiku shows the reader something that the writer cannot tell directly. The Haiku consists of seventeen syllables. If one follows the traditional Japanese structure with English Haiku, he can use a 5-7-5 syllable, or 3-5-3 syllable structure.

Haiku writing is a blend of experience, so the best time to compose a Haiku poem is right after the experience. Haiku should be egoless, without the word ‘I’. Most of the time, Haiku employs simple words to describe an experience in the present (“midnight rain”, “summer rain”). While writing a Haiku, I felt that judgmental words like ‘amazing’ and ‘frightening’ should be avoided. Haiku, like most poetry, are meant to be heard, rather than read on a page. After writing a Haiku down for the first time, it was helpful for me to read it aloud a few times and listen to how it sounds. This often revealed whether or not the Haiku “works”. Often, the deeper meaning is revealed only after hearing the Haiku for the second time. I kept on returning to the experiences of life while I was working on the poem. The unique aspects of Haiku are the inclusion of season and ‘cutting words’. While writing the Haiku, I realized that I have to observe even ordinary things and events closely. The most important and amazing aspect that I felt while creating Haiku is that, I have to let myself become one with that which I am trying observe or link. Identifying my own self with the Haiku helped me to understand the perspective of that which I desired to put in the poem. The incident may be a simple or complex, but if looked from a different perspective, pleasure will be there in every aspect of it. The major change that I found in myself is in perceiving the world around. First, I had to understand what I desire to express. Based on that understanding, I had to express my experiences in three short lines. But while creating Haiku, I realized that one has to keep working on one’s Haiku until it says just what he wants.

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**I**

an old notebook  
some empty pages  
a dried rose in it

**II**

that rickshaw-puller  
is a pleasure to look  
in this rain-clogged city

**III**

sleepiness  
jerked awake  
by midnight rain

**IV**

lock and key  
when I was a kid  
was fun to play

**V**

summer rain  
when the page peeled off  
a mark on the book





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# M I D D L E E A S T E R N



# I N T R O D U C T I O N

*Ritwika Pandey*

The West always looked at the East as the mirrored reflection of itself. The East was everything that the West was not is what Edward Said has said. The various art forms that come under the Middle Eastern section will make you realize how beautiful, exotic, intoxicating and jubilant they are. Ranging from the mesmerizing Ghazal, to the intricate Mehndi; from the hypnotic Belly Dancing to the enchanting Hebrew Biblical Narratives, this section will grasp your senses.

The Ghazal literally meant “talking to women,” and as an art form has an abundance of love and emotions. They are poems sung by the poet for his beloved. Even though the Ghazal originated in Persia, it is now practiced in Iran, Pakistan and India. The popularity of the Ghazal has increased through its use in movies and commercials.

Mehndi as an art form is all about patterns and designs that need deciphering and understanding. Different Mehndi designs have different meanings. It has become customary for people to include Mehndi in their celebrations and this art form has become a universal art with its acceptance worldwide.

The Raqs Sharqi, commonly known as Belly Dancing was performed by the temple priestesses to show their devotion to the Goddess of fertility. Young girls were sent to the temple to learn this dance from a young age. In the present days, belly dancing has seen a huge shift and is looked at as an erotic dance form. Even though the dance form has an enormous amount of sensuality attached to it, yet it did not originate for the purpose it is used for today.

The Hebrew Biblical Narratives developed from the oral tradition of storytelling. The Hebrews would tell stories of Yahweh's protection that they had experienced in their lives. The intensions of these stories were to make the children aware of the presence of God in their Lives.

The Middle Eastern Art forms will not just captivate you but also make you wonder about the mystery of the Middle East. Be ready for an enthralling experience!



## HEBREW BIBLICAL NARRATIVES

*Fr Siju Paul, CMI*

The Hebrew Biblical narrative forms have been developed from the oral tradition, through which they passed on stories of how Yahweh had protected them over the years. The structure of their written tradition follows that of their oral tradition, as their stories were originally meant to be read aloud. The style of writing followed in the Bible is predominantly narrative.

Biblical narrative is a living narrative tradition through the development of biblical story telling. Hans Frei told the story of the development of historical narratives as an aspect of the Enlightenment. According to him, prior to the eighteenth century, biblical narrative throughout the Western Christian tradition was read as being “realistic”, at once historical and literal.

This understanding of biblical narrative also embraced the experience of each community and person who reads the story. The stories of persons and communities made sense by being understood in the figures of “that storied world” of the Bible. Thus, the pre critical reading of biblical narrative included a clear framework by which personal and communal experience was connected with the stories of the Bible.

Now the narrative form of writing is very common in almost every language. The difference between these writings and Hebrew writings is the presence of God. The modern narrative form of writing in all other languages gives importance for the personal experience. These experiences are not something related to God or divine. The Hebrew narrative is a religious form of narrative where God is the central theme.

Regarding the dialogues in Hebrew narrative, the place they occupy is of crucial importance. Character dialogue is a significant clue to the story plot and the character of the speaker; Contrastive dialogue as a method of characterization. The narrator will emphasize crucial parts of the narrative by having characters summarize it in a speech.

The plot may be simple or complex, with many subplots vying for attention. The plot in Hebrew narrative moves rapidly, so when the pace of the plot slows, it signals the reader to pay attention.

In my production of the art form, there is an indirect presence of the narrator, while the presence of God is the central theme of the story. When Devika underwent tragic situations in her life she praised God. And thought that the God will help her. As a result of her hope, she got Murali as her own child. The very meaning of the name of the protagonist Devika also reminds us of the presence of God. In this story there are many characters. The narrator creates sympathy towards Devika in proper arrangement of the characters. The dialogues in the story are in typical form of Hebrew narratives. The plot of the play changes continuously. From Kerala to Tamil Nadu and back to Kerala again. In doing so, the changing possibility of the plot was also fulfilled.

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*Devika*

In the days when Mr. Chaudary was the Chief Minister of Kerala, there was a religious war between Hindus and Muslims in the place called Krishnapura. The Hindus were not allowed to be continued in the land. They were compelled to run away from Krishnapura to Tamil Nadu. One of them was Mr. Aravind, a religious man, his wife Devika and child Abhishek. They went to the city called Theni and remained there. After several years unfortunately Abhishek and Aravind met with an accident in Theni and died. After this accident the people of the land did not allow her to continue there, they believed that is her fate, being a widow she was not allowed to be continued.

So she wanted to return to their own home land. After the accident Devika became violent and she asked God why she should face all these things? Murali the friend of Abhishek used to visit her every day. Slowly she started to see Murali as her own child Abhishek. He also had a same feeling to Devika.

Then she started return alone from Theni to Krishnapauram, for she had heard in Theni the God heard their prayer, and given them peace. So she set out from the place where she had been living.. Murali was very sad to leave her alone. She went on her way to go back to her own land. Devika said to Murali “Go back to your house where you have your parents”.

He started to weep, Murali said

“Do not press me mother to leave you

Or to turn back from following you

Where you go I will go

Where you stay, I will stay

Your relatives will be mine too”

She started to cry...

When they came back to her own land the whole city was stirred because of them, and people said “Is this Devika”?

She said,

“I went away full

In between I was empty

But God blessed me with a new child

Murali my own son.”

Devika, the loving mother returned together with Murali. They came to the land at the period of Ramzan, the Islamic feast of vows.



## MEHNDI

*Ritwika Pandey*

Mehndi is seen as a necessity to mark any kind of celebration - religious, social or ceremonial occasions - in today's world. Mehndi marks joy and happiness and has been accepted across the world as an art form which can be experimented with in terms of the designs and the patterns. Since the colour of Mehndi is temporary, it is used for tattooing by people who do not wish to get inked for life or are not sure about the design they want. Mehndi refers to the design made using Henna, which stains the skin. Even though the origin of Mehndi is unknown, henna has been in use since the time of the Pharaohs in Egypt. Henna is made by crushing the cypress flowers (also known as the 'Henna plant'.) Henna was used 5,000 years ago as a cooling and healing agent and was also used to stain the hands and feet of the Pharaoh before mummification.

Due to migration and the nomadic life of people, the cultural interactions caused a lot of changes in the art form of Mehndi. This art varies from one region to another and straddles across several cultures, religions, traditions, customs and generations. Hence it is possible to understand the diversity of cultures through the Mehndi they apply. There are four distinct types of Mehndi - the Middle Eastern style, the North African Style, the Pakistani-Indian Style and the Indonesian and South Asian Style. While the later two seem to have been influenced by the former two, the former two seem very different from one another. While the Middle Eastern style has floral patterns and *mandalas* which indicate joy and happiness and the many layers of reality that move towards an inner truth, the African Style follows geometric patterns like squares, circles and triangles that seems rooted in religious, emotional and social world. In Mehndi, each symbol has a separate and distinct meaning.

In my representation of the art form I have tried to merge the two forms of Mehndi that seemed very distant from each other in terms of design and pattern- the North African Mehndi and the Middle Eastern Mehndi. In the first figure, I have tried to contextualize the Mehndi designs in terms of maintaining peace through the coming together of religion, in this case Hinduism and Islam. I have used two hands to show the harmony. While the left hand stands for Hinduism, the right hand stands for Islam, and only when they are joined does the pigeon i.e. the symbol of peace become complete. I have used the two hands to represent unity. In the second representation I have showed the continuity of life by showcasing the four seasons - spring, summer, monsoon and winter. This also signifies the different moods of man that, like the seasons, vary and are never constant.

Mehndi is an enchanting art that has become world art because it has not only been adapted enormously but also because it has a mystery about it that needs one to study it deeply to interpret it and

understand the significance of it. Like all other art forms, Mehndi has a lot that is beyond the physical eye. It is left for the inner eye to realise the aesthetics of a Mehndi design and comprehend what the artist had in mind.



*Mehndi Artwork produced by Ritwika*

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## GHAZAL

*Sangeeta Nath*

The Arabic word “Ghazal” literally means “talking to women”. Thus, mostly, the Ghazal is far from religious in its subject matter and indeed the form appears to have an abundance of love and emotions. It is a poem that is sung for your beloved. The Ghazal was developed in Persia in the 10th century AD from the Arabic verse form of *Qasida*. It came to India with the Mogul invasion in the 12th century. The Ghazal tradition is currently practiced in Iran, Pakistan and India. In India and Pakistan, Ghazals are set to music and they have achieved commercial popularity as recordings and in movies.

A traditional Ghazal consists of five to fifteen couplets, typically seven. A refrain (a repeated word or phrase) appears at the end of both lines of the first couplet and at the end of the second line in each succeeding couplet. The lines should be of approximately the same length and meter. The poet may use the final couplet as a signature couplet. The first couplet is called the *Matla* or the place where the heavenly body rises. It literally signifies the commencement of the poem.

Ghazals are sometimes even equated with Haiku, the famous Japanese poem. The love in each of these poems is metaphysical and the same images of seasons and nature as well as dealing with political issues could be frequently traced in both. Moreover, each is influenced by a religious worldview—Haiku by Buddhism and Ghazal by Islam—which shapes even its descriptions of ordinary life. Despite a few similarities, both the forms of art have developed as individual forms of art and have undergone the process of worlding in its own ways.

The ghazal is a form of art. It not only has a specific rhyme scheme and a set meter to it, but also has a particular technical way of writing it. Art is "the use of skill and imagination in the creation of aesthetic objects, environments, or experiences that can be shared with others". According to Plato, “art is represented by poetry”. Art is something that stimulates an individual's thoughts, emotions, beliefs, or ideas through the way of senses. Though there is no fixed and exact definition of art; there are parameters that define art for us. Judging by Plato’s parameters of art, it is represented through poetry. Ghazals thus being a form of poetry in itself would suffice as an art form.

Ghazal as a form of art undergoes the process of worlding. For me, the process of worlding is continuous and dynamic. It cannot cease at any point in time. Worlding is like a rolling stone, which gathers moss on its way. It keeps on changing and evolving with time and also encompasses within itself the characteristics of the age. Ghazals have undergone a massive change since the time it has evolved. Earlier it was just poetry, which turned to *Shers*, then songs and now it has developed into an entire genre in music, popular culture, literature and art. Thus a process of worlding is quite evident in this art form.

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**GHAZAL 1**

**HINDI**

Behte Ashqon ki zubaan nahi hoti  
Lafzon mein mohabbat bayaan nahi hoti  
Labon pe ate hi chalak jaate hain  
Ashqon ka kya hai, wo to yun hi beh jaate hain

Aakhon ki baatein labon tak nahi aati  
Aati hai teri yaad magar phir nahi jaati  
Mera kya hai, main toh bas aashiq hun tera  
Tere seene me jo dil hai, wo bhi toh hai mera

Mere dil ki dhadkan tere kaano tak nahi jati  
Dhadak- dhadak ke yeh meri jaan hi le jati  
Dhadkano ka kya hai, yeh to hoti hain bechain  
Jab jab gour se main dekhun tere nain

Tu toh chal di kehkar ke mujhe bhool jana  
Par mujhpar kya beeti meri jaan tune na jaana



## GHAZAL 1

### ENGLISH

Brimming tears have no voice of its own  
Love even when expressed has no words of its own  
You fail to express it  
And the tears continue to fall at its own feat.

What my eyes see words can't express  
I miss you in times of distress  
Who am I? I'm just your meek lover  
It is your heart that beats, but I who suffer.

You cannot hear my beating heart  
It takes away my life with a start  
My heart beats faster with every passing minute  
The moment I look into your eyes and see love in it.

You just left without a second thought  
And I stood there feeling miserable and distraught.

## GAZAL 2

### HINDI

Raah takti thi tum  
Par chalta toh main hi tha

Yaad karti thi tum  
Par aata toh main hi tha

Aasun bahaati thi tum  
Par behta toh main hi tha  
Kabhi girti thi tum  
Toh woh dard toh main hi tha

Deeya jalati thi tum  
Par jalta toh main hi tha  
Jin palon mein yaad kiya tumne  
Unme beet- ta toh main hi tha

Kabhi chhuti thi tum  
Toh who ehsaas toh main hi tha

Jab jati thi mujhse door  
Woh intzaar toh main hi tha

Har dastak ki har aahat  
Har aahat ke baad ka sannata

Haan... Main hi tha

## **GHAZAL 2**

### **ENGLISH**

You looked out for me  
But I was the one who walked  
You missed me  
But I was the one who was being missed.

You cried for me  
But I was the one who turned to tears  
You fell for me  
But I was the one with all the fears.

You lit a lamp for me  
But I was the one being burned  
You missed me each moment  
But I was the one who suffered.

You touched me  
But I was the one who felt the touch

You left me  
But I was the one who waited much.

Every sound and every movement  
Every lull before a storm  
Yes, it was I... Always...

### **GHAZAL 3**

#### **HINDI**

Aakhon mein bekaraari  
Kal bhi thi, aaj bhi hai  
Lafzon pe tera naam  
Kal bhi tha aur aaj bhi hai

Dil ki dhadkan tez  
Kal bhi thi, aaj bhi hai  
Hamein tumse mohabbat  
Kal bhi thi, aaj bhi hai

Har parde pe tera chehra  
Kal bhi tha aur aaj bhi hai  
Har palkon pe teri nami  
Kal bhi thi, aaj bhi hai

Har kaanon me ek goonj

Kal bhi thi, aaj bhi hai

Har dil me ek pyaar

Kal bhi tha, aaj bhi hai

Har aahat pe tera zikr

Har sannate ke baad ek toofaan

Tujhse milne ke baad ek pyaas

Milte milte bhi teri chaah

Kal bhi thi...

Aur aaj bhi hai...

### **GHAZAL 3**

#### **ENGLISH**

My eyes were impatient

Yesterday, today and forever

I utter your name a thousand times

Always and forever.

My heart beat faster

Yesterday, today and forever

I will love you

Always and forever.

Your face was everywhere  
Yesterday, today and forever

My eyes were teary  
Always and forever.

Every sound reminded me of you  
Yesterday, today and forever

Your love was in my heart  
Always and forever.

Every sound had your voice  
Every silence had your name  
Each meeting had a thirst  
Each thirst grew stronger  
Yesterday, today and forever...

#### **GHAZAL 4**

#### **HINDI**

Yun nazar utha ke dekha

Ke dil chura gaye  
Tere nazron ke teer  
Toh hame ghayal bana gaye

Yun zulfein teri lehraain  
Ke hamne dil thaam liya  
Inki ghani chaaon ko  
Hamne jahaan maan liya

Palkon se nazraane  
Diye nahi jaate  
Labon ke paimaane  
Piye nahi jaate

Aakhir kaun hun main  
Koi mujhse puche toh sahi

Ek adhoora khat hun main  
Koi mujhe likhe toh sahi

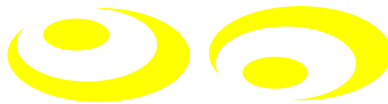
**GHAZAL 4**

**ENGLISH**

Why do we choose to live two lives  
Why did we commit this felony?

If life is a bed of roses  
Then why is death its destination?  
If all love results in separation  
Then why is every lover under obligation?

If hard work is the way of life  
Then why do we follow the path of treachery so soon?  
If we need to live in order to die  
Then how is life such a boon?





## RAQS SHARQI

*Shrutika Ghorpade*

Popularly known as belly dancing, *Raqs Sharqi* is considered to be one of the oldest dance forms in the world. A literal translation of *Raqs Sharqi* into English would be, “the dance of the East”, or “oriental dance”. The origin of belly dance and the theories behind it have been debated by many dance enthusiasts in the absence of proper research regarding the particular field. Hence, dancers investigate the history and derive theories based on their research. It is believed that *Raqs Sharqi* had originated from another dance form known as *Raqs Baladi*, having its roots in the Egyptian culture. However, the current understanding of belly dancing would include both the dance forms as they are very similar to each other.

It was believed that *Raqs Sharqi* was performed by temple priestesses to show their devotion for the goddess of fertility. It was considered a great honour to be chosen as a belly dancer, and girls were sent to the temple to practice the art form from an early age. In contemporary society, belly dancing has been glamorized and is perceived as an erotic form of dance. However, considering its origin, it is clear that this art form was not created with the same intention centuries ago. In the Middle East, belly dance is seen as a social activity, in which men and women participate in the dance voluntarily in social gatherings such as weddings. Many western countries have incorporated the hip movements involved in the dance into Lamaze classes as it is believed that these movements help in increasing the fertility of a woman and easing childbirth. There is no denying the sensuality attached to the dance, but belly dance has been misunderstood throughout the world as an indecent dance form, drastically departing from the original sanctity of the art form.



*Raqs Sharqi by Shrutika*

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# E U R O P E A N

# I N T R O D U C T I O N

*Chandna Singh Nirwan*

Gear yourselves up for an exquisite jaunt of vivid cultures all served on the same platter. In this section, you will get to read about various European art forms. These art forms were either originated in Europe or gained recognition and popularity when practiced by the inhabitants of Europe. There are many diverse written and oral art forms, like the Russian folklore, which falls under the genre of Fairy Tales. The folklore presented a fine blend of prominent themes like men, nature, religion and supernatural elements. The different poetic art forms were the “Triolet” and “Cento”. Triolet is an eight-lined poem which emphasizes on repetition of lines and set rhyme scheme of ABaAabAB, and Cento is a poetic art form that is also popularly known as the “patchwork poetry” for a poet borrows lines from other poem/poems to write his own. Another literary art form, “Apocalyptic writing” gained its importance from the Holy Bible. This form of creative writing employs symbolisms and powerful images to prick the imagination of the readers and to induce fear and suspense in them. It is both educative and entertaining. Another fascinating art form is the “Venetian Masks”. These masks though initially used by Africans to pray during the harvest time gained popularity in the reign of Julius Caesar. The European invaders brought these masks and their stories along. They morphed these stories to suit their Christian practices. Later these masks became really popular especially during the carnival time. Another interesting art form is “Quilling”, which is also popularly known as ‘paper filigree’. In this art form, thin strips of coloured paper are used which are coiled, glued and pinched to form designs. And lastly, “Ekphrasis” is one of those European forms which has undergone many changes overtime but is still practised. In this art form, art is used to talk about art. This rich cultural European legacy makes the platter mouth-watering and peppery and a must have on your list of delicacies.



## APOCALYPTIC WRITING

*Sajith Cyriac*

Apocalyptic writing as a literary genre gained its importance from the Holy Bible (*Daniel* in the Old Testament and *Revelation* in the New Testament). Literature bearing of apocalyptic simply means revealing what has been hidden. Apocalyptic writing is the product of the Judeo-Christian tradition in post-exilic period. There was also cessation of prophecy that would tell people the reasons for their sufferings and afflictions. As a result, there was an urgent need for revelation. At this time apocalyptic writing emerged as an answer to many problems faced by the people. This regional form was extended to rest of the world. It gained prominence over the years. The writers from European countries recognized the potential of this genre and made use of it. Thus its popularity grew, and lots of fiction based on apocalypses was written over the years.

Apocalyptic writing is a way of creative writing; it requires lot of imagination following a certain criteria. It highly employs symbolisms and powerful images to prick the imagination of the readers and to induce fear and suspense in them. It is both educative and entertaining.

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### **"You'll be a Blessing Forever!"**

Anyone who goes to sleep expects a better tomorrow when he or she gets up the next morning. My story was different from all just because all the days were at its best where I lived. But unlike other days, this morning I woke up to the sound of some jubilation. The first glimpse I captured was that of the sun that just shone its warm golden light over the mountain of God's city. The entire pasture was blazing under its morning warmth. While enjoying the dews that were apparently visible on grasses nearby, I heard a knock at my door: "Open the door, my son..."

To my surprise, it was angel Gabriel, an unusual visitor at the time of the day. "Halleluiah! What good news have you brought this morning? I hear a song of jubilation all around," I enquired.

Gabriel said in haste, "How could you forget the importance of this day! Today is the diamond jubilee of your death anniversary, my son. Therefore, we want to mark your entry to this place with due importance. Today the entire heaven celebrates the day in your honour of you. Jesus, the Son of God will have something special for you." With these words, he left my room with a smile on his face.

My joy knew no bound. 100 years in the presence of the Almighty! Sounds remarkable! After so many years, I felt as if I landed up in my eternal home just yesterday. How could it not be when a thousand years are like a single day for the Almighty! My fresh memories couldn't hold the plight I had underwent to reach where I am now. They began to scroll like a film reel, and slowly left my celestial body motionless while they plunged into my past... a journey towards my heavenly abode.

How could a young man get so bored at the prime years of his life in a world that offered him all that he could dream of! Nevertheless, once the existential angst that had crept into me began to paralyze me, I had no second thought other than to commit suicide. And I was almost sure that there was nothing after this life because that was how many of the geniuses in the world understood it.

A coward by birth, it was extremely difficult for me to take that final step. But looking at the bleak future that awaited me, I had nothing to hope for. Finally I chose a 'Bad Friday' to say goodbye to the world of my existential anguish.

Being a Christian for practical purposes but an atheist at heart, the thought of prayer never occurred to me at that moment. If I acknowledged God's name at all, it was only as a blasphemy. Beyond my expectation, I was pretty successful at my first attempt. But I could see my guardian angel was unhappy with me for trying to whack myself. We argued for about three hours (earthly time) before I uncompromisingly left my physical body without any remorse.

Then I heard my name: "Sajith, Sajith, come here." The voice was from the doorway. Then there were multiple voices calling out my name. Frozen in fear I asked who they were, and they said, "Accompany us. We are concerned about you."

Having heard this, my anxiety grew all the more. I had many questions to them, yet they gave only deceptive answers. All that they insisted was to hurry up to enter through the royal gate. With hesitation I entered through the supposedly royal gate filled with fog, and then I could vaguely see the people who were calling me numbered a dozen. They appeared like silhouettes. As and when I moved towards them, they immediately abjured far into the fog, forcing me to follow into the fog further.

It seemed to me that we had been walking for millions and millions of miles. There was a real sense of eternity about the experience. At one point when I looked back, I could see my body getting decayed under the earth.

As we moved further, there was a change in the people. At first they appeared rather silly, but when we had crossed a considerable distance, a few of them began to get barbaric. The more questioning and suspicious I was the more brutish and authoritarian they became. They began to joke about my tragic end; when they knew that I was attentive to them, they murmured something to each other.

Feeling restless, especially since they continued to get aggressive, I thought of returning, but I didn't know how to get back. I was lost. There was just the fog and a drizzly ground, and I had lost the sense of direction.

However I insisted that I wouldn't go any farther. Then they became all the more aggressive and insulted me. They began to push and shove me and I was helpless despite my resistance. It was obvious that they were having fun.

As we reached a scary desert like place – chasm of hell in appearance – there was complete darkness. There I noticed many broken pillars placed in a random order. They were pillars of virtues twisted into envy, lust, wrath, gluttony, sloth and avarice. On each pillar, dozens of human souls were crucified upside down. They were all screaming and pining for something. It seemed to me as if it was the beginning of their evolutionary process of becoming demonic creatures.

Innumerable hosts of the similar ones, who accompanied me, appeared there from nowhere. Those mob of beings looked very weird and disgusting. They did have burning red eyes and expansive wings. They were the creatures who were controlled by awful cruelty and wild passions.

At my first sight itself, most of the beings gave up in disappointment because I was not up to their amusement, but a few – must be female demons – still held and gnawed at me and disdained me for no longer being any fun. Finally they all left me with a label on me – 'hopelessness'. I lost the freedom even to cry aloud just because my self-imposed action had endless ramifications. With no strength, I crawled on the hot sand cursing my fate. "I am damned forever," I regretted.

Days, months, and years passed. I spent each moment lingering on in hopeless despair, and rolling amidst endless torments without the possibility of easement and without end. At times they would cast me into fiery ovens and burning furnace. And I knew that I must bear it forever and ever! The torments of this place were extremely greater than all the illustrations I was told while on earth. As I underwent torments one after another, I began to hear a voice inside me that said, "Pray to God." Though I belittled the voice for long time, my mind began to whisper me, "I don't pray. I don't even know how to pray."

The situation seemed irrevocable, and I ignored the voice. But the voice repeatedly urged me to pray to God. With lots of dilemma I mumbled the prayer I heard a few times in my lifetime, "Our Father who art in heaven..."

Suddenly a group of demons bounced at me, yelling obscenities. They shouted, "There is no God....." But I screamed back at them even more loudly, reciting, "Our Father who art in heaven..." I kept saying it despite the fact that I was torn and ripped. Not long enough before I started praying, I began to see a tiny moving star. One day it came towards me and as it reached near, its radiance spilled over me. I was lifted up with an unknown powerful hand and

I could feel my bruises and tears melting away. I could see an array of angels covering me around with a white robe. Soon before I could realize the changes in me, I was transported to another realm of existence. When I opened my eyes, I could see only angels in dazzling colours. Then a little angel took my hand and invited me to accompany him. He took me to the golden gate of Garden of Eden where millions of souls and angels headed by Michael welcomed me with choirs.

At the instruction of Michael, the minister of angelic force, angel Raphael gave me a glimpse of the place I just arrived. It was a bountiful paradise, surrounded by two rivers – the river of milk and the river of honey. The green pastures and meadows spread over there enticed my eyes. Different animals and birds co-existed. No obscene appetites, no competitions. The trees in the gardens were full of diverse fruits.

Then I noticed numerous souls singing the praises of God unceasingly without getting tired. They all appeared to be content and cheerful. They loved each other in a way that I had never known that love could possibly be.

Yet another knock on my door awakened me from my lost thought. It was angel Cherubim who affectionately said, “The celebration has already begun. I came to accompany you, my Son. Come, let’s go.” I followed him to the banquet hall where everyone received me with a loud round of applause. It was followed by the melodious choirs of angels, under the leadership of Israfael, the angel of song.

By unanimous acclaim, Jesus was the keynote speaker of the day’s banquet. When everyone was seated, Jesus spoke of suffering and victory in reference to me. Then it was the turn of the Holy Spirit who delivered an awe-inspiring speech. Everyone understood it well and they commented on it in differing tongues. Further he added, “I have an exciting offer for you. God the Father has just finished creating a few dozens of new galaxies. How many of you wish to participate in the work of their salvation?”

With no second thought in mind I stood up. Then one soul after another began to stand up, and finally all were up.

Then there echoed a mighty voice – must be God the Father’s – from all the four corners of heaven: “You’ll be a blessing forever!”





## EKPHRASIS

*Chandna Singh Nirwan*

Ekphrasis is an art form that originated in Greece. It refers to the activity where two art forms come into play at the same time, such as, painting and poetry. The poet would refer to any painting and write a poem based on his thoughts about the painting or vice-a versa. Initially it was adopted as a method for inculcating the habits of thinking and learning, so even if the object that was being written about was absent or imaginative the art was encouraged. One of the earliest and most often referenced examples of this kind of Ekphrasis comes from Homer's 'Illiad' where the description of Achilles' shield appears as a part of the narrative. I have written a poem "dreamy reality" based on a painting by Steven Campbell and drawn a painting based on the poem by Emily Dickinson.

According to me, the painter (Steven Campbell) is trying to depict turmoil in the painting. The will to break free from the clutches that are holding him down. It is evident from his expressions and action of smashing the chain with a spear. According to me, this depiction can be understood from two perspectives. First, let's consider the painted face as the man's own reflection when he is mulling over a problem and trying to figure out a suitable conclusion. In that sense the painted face is the reflection of the man who is sitting and contemplating. The other idea can be the painting can be a scene witnessed by the painter in his dreams. The reason being the painted face looks like an onlooker in the painting..

The painting is based on the poem "Because I Could Not..." by Emily Dickinson. According to me, the poet personifies "death" as a suitor who would come in a chariot to drive her away from all the miseries and chaos of the routine life. In this chariot she would be in perfect union with death and they would make their way to eternity. The poet further gives the details of the various earthly events that she witnessed on her way to eternity, like the children at school, fields, the setting sun, and the dew drops on her gossamer gown and a "swelling of the ground".

In the painting, certain colours are used to represent certain ideas. For instance, I have painted all the "earthly" objects on a background of green and the chariot, which is moving towards eternity, in the blue sky. The holy eternal light is shown in white with taints of yellow. The smile on the girl's face shows her sense of comfort and her happiness in being one with her "suitor". The school is painted in grey, the setting sun in orange and the fields have been shown by a scarecrow. Also the swelling of the ground is shown in brown to show the freshly dug grave and the cross in black to depict death. I have positioned the setting sun in bottom right corner of the painting and eternal light in the top right corner to depict the contrast of the end of one life and the dawn of a new one. The grave and the eternal light have been positioned quite near for grave is symbolic of the poet's union with immortality.

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“Dreamy Reality”

Dark night, blue waters of the sea,  
a boat chained to the cliff.

Aggression, power, disharmony and retaliation  
Channelled through spear and imagination.

Torrential waters striking the sides,  
moon and painted face starkly coincide  
Calm, serene, placidity and peace;  
Dream, worry, fear or fancy?



The painting is based on the following poem by Emily Dickinson:

Because I could not stop for Death,  
He kindly stopped for me;  
The carriage held but just ourselves  
And Immortality.

We slowly drove, he knew no haste,  
And I had put away  
My labor, and my leisure too,  
For his civility.

We passed the school, where children strove

At recess, in the ring;

We passed the fields of gazing grain,

We passed the setting sun.

Or rather, he passed us;

The dews grew quivering and chill,

For only gossamer my gown,

My tippet only tulle.

We paused before a house that seemed

A swelling of the ground;

The roof was scarcely visible,

The cornice but a mound.

Since then 'tis centuries, and yet each

Feels shorter than the day

I first surmised the horses' heads

Were toward eternity.



## ACROSTIC POETRY

*Anu James*

An acrostic poetry is a style of poetry similar to acronym, where the first letter of each line spells out a word or phrase which makes the title of the poem. The word comes from the Greek words, 'Akron' and 'Stikhos' which means 'end' and 'line of verse' respectively. It has been said that acrostic poetry existed even before the time of Jesus Christ. Acrostics were seen common among the Greeks of the Alexandrine period. It has been recorded that about 100 years before a letter came from US to UK, which followed acrostic style. It was also seen popular during the Middle German and Italian Renaissance periods among the monks and poets. The name 'acrostic' initially used to describe the prophecies of Erythraean Sibyl which were written on leaves arranged so that the first letter on each leaf formed a word.

In the middle of the 19th century, there were lots of books which had acrostic poems in them praising the kings and conquerors as well as to educate children in geography and history. Poems or any kind of creative work is considered to be the expression of the poet. The poem is written by writing the letters of the topic word vertically down the page. Each line of the poem should begin with the respective letter, and as a whole, the poem must be on the topic which is selected. Through the poems, the emotions and feelings are expressed by the poet. Even though acrostic poetry does not stick to any specific rules, it might become complex at times since the poet must have good command over language and should have good vocabulary. Acrostic poems don't rhyme normally. The word choice must be appropriate to the context in which it is used.

The poem 'EXAMINATION' was written from my own personal experience. I quote the words of William Wordsworth, "Poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful emotions recollected in tranquility." The poem 'Examination' was written exactly due to the spontaneous overflow of my emotions. When I missed one of my examinations, I wasn't able to control my tears and this poem came to my mind even without any brainstorming. This is the only poem for which I didn't spend much time on thinking appropriate words. All those words came to my mind randomly. Therefore I consider this as the apt poem which expressed the powerful feelings as a poet. This is the only poem which is written with 'I' as the narrator.

The poem 'RELIGION' has 8 lines and it explains the importance of religion and the presence of God in our life. The line which I like the most is "Insurance policy from God". I was trying to include some humour through this line since this seemed to be a serious poem. The presence of God is everywhere, He is omnipresent and this led me to write this poem.

The poem 'ENERGY' seems to have a scientific background. When this word was thought as a topic, the concept of energy from God came to my mind. In order to avoid repetition of idea, I tried to look at it from a scientific perspective, with which I had little familiarity. Therefore, I had to use a dictionary to find the words that matched the topic and it was a challenging task for me.

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**EXAMINATION**

Every students fear factor

Xerox copies of all notes in hands

A day before the exam

Might not read all notes

Instead, gets relief when they are in hands

Nervous enough since just hours left

All night out studying, alarm set

Time to sleep, exam at 10

I got up in the morning

Oh! God, the time is 10.45

Nothing else, the alarm clock just cheated.

**RELIGION**

Realm of solace spreads

Enriches you with love

Lightens you in darkness

Insurance policy from God

Guides you in trouble

Infinite is the wisdom you get

**Omnipresent the great God**

Never failing presence.

**ENERGY**

Electrifying the world

Nuclear for good or bad

Environment friendly it is

Renewable is awesome

Geothermal when available

Yuk yuk its getting hot.



## VENETIAN MASKS

*Gurekta Sethi*

The history of Venetian masks can be traced back to Egypt. The pagan festival of worshipping the Sun God required people to conceal their faces with a mask while praying for a good harvest. When Julius Caesar and his army returned from the African conquest, they brought with them stories of this masked pagan festival which the Italians assimilated with their Christian practices. Known as ‘Carnivale’, it was a celebration of indulgence that preceded the Lenten period of fasting.

This Christian makeover helped the mask to flourish, where Venetians did not restrict wearing the masks only for “Carnivals”. Soon, an integral part of their attire, people started disguising themselves, realizing that they could indulge in secretive activities frowned upon by the church. The masks also served as a medium of preventing any kind of prejudices and inequality, in a state where ranks and distinctions were of paramount importance. On the contrary publically condemned behaviour and homosexuality were now being carried out under the protection of the Masks in the Venetian societies which included clergymen and nuns.

Eventually the wearing of masks was banned, restricted only to a few days before the lent season and known today as the carnival , a tourist attraction in Venice.

The Venetian masks can be seen as a performative art form as it caters to an interdisciplinary audience. The minute one wears a mask they become a performer, it can be spontaneous or scripted, one can be alone or part of a larger group it doesn’t matter because once the mask is on, you are performing.

Anyone today can relate to a mask. We have seen them in art, pre historic to contemporary. From Picasso and Freida Kahlo to superheros and villains art, literature and films use masks to conceal their identity so that they are able to do things without being identified.

When a community wants to express a shared feeling they take out a procession wearing a mask. Masks have become an integral part of present era. Negating its original purpose, it still serves as a means of expression for an individual or a community at large.

The masks created by me are inspired by the traditional and contemporary Venetian masks but are based in Indian context. One of the mask celebrates female gender. Female Feoticide is the harsh reality of India and there is need to end discrimination

The second mask attempts to capture the essence of an Indian today. Due to colonial experience, Indians have an hybrid identity. Globalization has further had an impact which has lead to adoption of various western ideals by Indians. Hybridity is the notion depicted in this mask inspired by the traditional venetian mask called the Trifaccia which was used to depict the three emotions of theatre.

The last mask celebrates sexual freedom. The passing of Section 377 gave the LGBT community and India a sense of victory and freedom. Inspired by the various animal masks used in current carnivals, this mask depicts freedom of choice of sexual identity Indians possess today.

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*Mask celebrating Gender*



*Celebrating homosexuality*



*Mask inspired by post colonial concept of hybridity*





## QUILLING

*Neethu Ann Jose*

Quilling is an art form which makes use of thin strips of coloured paper which are coiled, glued, and pinched to form designs. It is also called paper filigree.

Some of the materials used in quilling are a quilling tool, strips of papers and glue. The strips of paper are first rolled with the help of a quilling tool into tight or loose coils based on the requirement of the design. Then, the tip of the strip is glued and the coil is pinched and shaped. Many such shapes are glued together to form an ornate design. If quilled works are varnished, they can be preserved for a very long time. Quilled works are used to decorate watch dials, boxes, greeting cards, photo frames and anything that has the scope of decoration.

This was a dying art but it is gaining popularity in the 21st century due to the availability of paper at lower prices. With time there are many changes in techniques which have been introduced in quilling. Some people also use quilling to make 3D objects which are displayed as show pieces. Different artists from all over the world have appropriated and worlded this art form.

Quilling is truly a world art because although it originated in Italy and France, it has been appropriated and developed by different people across the world who have brought in a new lease of life to this art form. The development of the internet has helped quilling artists worldwide to share their ideas, techniques and tips. It is only through sharing of knowledge that an art form can improve and evolve. The revival of quilling has happened due to the generosity of the people who have practiced it for years together.

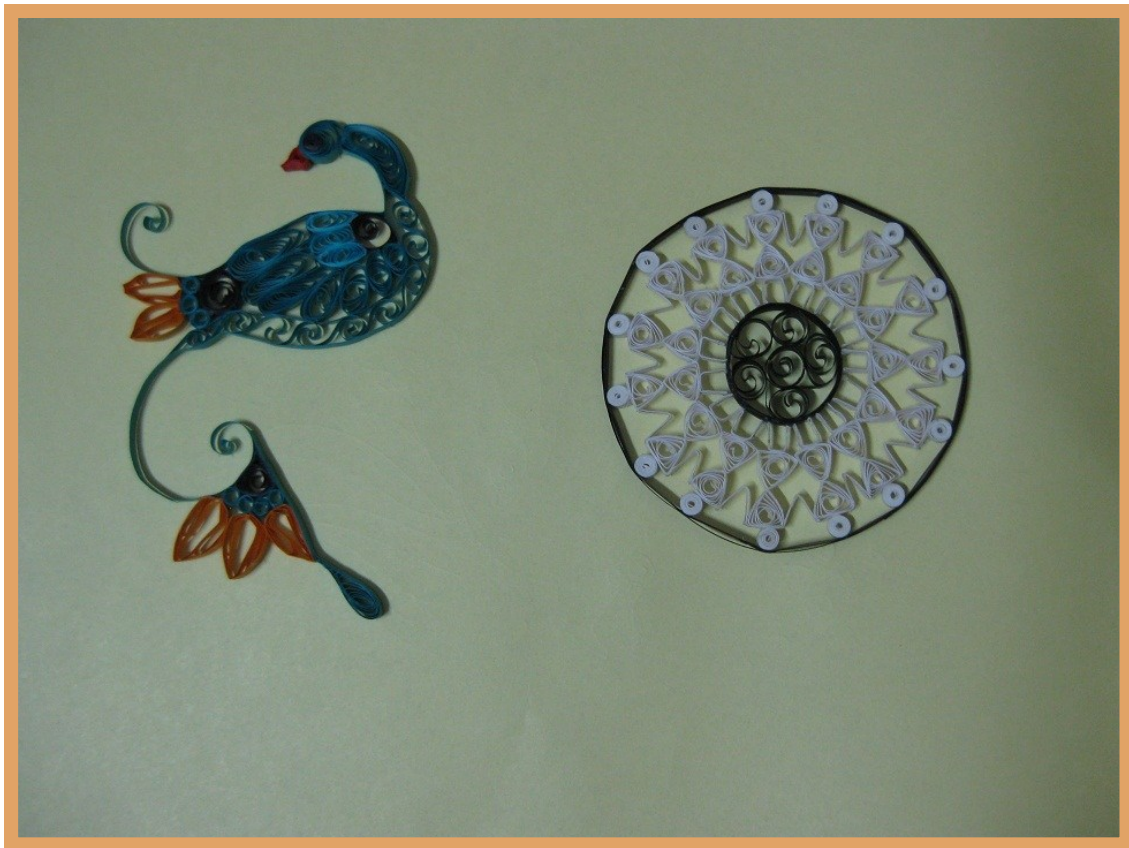
The quilled peacock motif has been done using five colours. The blue and purple complement each other and the orange and red are used for contrast to brighten up the picture. All the work is done using loose coils except for the eye of the peacock which is done using a tight purple coil. There is a sense of balance and fluidity in the motif since it has been inspired by traditional Mehendi designs of India. The body of the peacock has been done with a lot of intricate details. An advanced quilling technique called the honeycomb technique is used to line the lower part of the body and the tail. Overall the work is bright and colourful and very Indian. Peacock is the Indian national bird and in a common sight in many parts of the country. The vibrant colours of the peacock have always fascinated me and this seemed like the best choice that I could make to world this art form.

The second work is a pendant inspired by Warli painting. In this work I have used only two colours – black and white. The centre is done with black and the little human figures around it are done with white. The figures look like they are holding hands. The centre consists of swirls which look like a tornado. This symbolizes chaos. The shape of the piece is circular and symmetrical; therefore it is

balanced in its composition. This balance is also representative of the balance that would exist in an ideal world with all people working in harmony. The human figures look like they are dancing around the world in circles in absolute bliss.

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*Quilling by Neethu Ann Jose*



## TERZA RIMA

*Puja Prakash*

Terza Rima is originally an Italian poetic form that was born with Dante's "Divine Comedia". It borrows from the rich tradition of a sestina, a structured 39-line poem that consists of six stanzas of six lines each. Dante appropriated a rather evocative and pensive form out of this rigid structure. Terza Rima is an interlocking verse; its rhyme scheme is in the pattern – a-b-a, b-c-b, c-d-c, d. It is a seamless blend between two forward steps and a backward motion.

In 1310-1313, Dante, invested in this form, his ideology. Dante did not set out to become a writer/poet. It was during his period of exile that he began writing and invested the Terza Rima verse form with his political predispositions. Each line of the Terza Rima is dedicated to the Holy Trinity and the movement of these lines across the poem is effortless. It suggests patterned knowing through constant reiteration of rhymed words and patterned reflecting of thoughts and impressions. The recurring textured transcendence from known to unknown is a microcosmic of the journey of self-knowledge.

Unlike other tercet forms, I had to write a poem with stanzas, not just independent verses. This was a particularly difficult task because of the demands of the structure of the Terza Rima. My poem was an outcome of both informed and attached selection and some elements of a hallowed presence. As much as I was deeply engaged at a gross level, I felt a strange sense of ease while writing as well.

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## Rainy Streets

It is that day of the week when them-  
The jolly gang look gloomy, look choppy,  
Into each other they're without a hem.

They throw tantrums, no one knows when they'll free  
Themselves of their sulky blues...  
Their rage, tumbling down from their canopy.

But when they fall, the angry mob brightens hues.  
All things dry and drab now brisk and bright,  
The world: not short of an incredible muse.

The piles of scrap, garbage and debris fight,  
The browns are browner and the reds redder.  
Each one to prove its own glory and might.

Enchanted by this pitter patter-  
Only a few enjoy the vivid tinge,  
In that puddle where oil blends with water!

Only a few enjoy the vivid tinge,  
Those who prepare their eyebrows to cringe!



## CENTO

*Radhika Shenoy*

Cento is a poetic form that essentially thrives on previous genius. It involves borrowing lines from the works of other poets in order to create a whole new poem. Hence, it is also known as “patchwork poetry”. Some poets tend to modify the borrowed lines to suit their needs.

The art form originated in classical Greek and Roman works. The earliest known Cento, *Medea* by Hosidius Geta dates back to the 3rd or 4th century, and was created by borrowing lines from Virgil’s works. The present status of the Cento as a poetic technique, taught in schools and colleges, takes away the Renaissance idea of it being a game to be played or a puzzle to be solved. Modern, witty centos differ from the ancient ones, in terms of their themes. While the modern centos work with contemporary themes and concerns, the ancient centos dealt primarily with biblical themes. Nevertheless the technique of writing a cento has not undergone any drastic changes, completing the process of world-ing in which the themes have undergone change but not the technique or desired effect.

*Life in Teaspoons* is an ode to T.S.Eliot. The poem (not intentionally) is an extension of *The Love Song Of J.Alfred Prufrock*, and attempts to explore what would actually happen had Prufrock not been so indecisive. The haiku is a small description of the monsoons which everyone enjoys. *I, Annabel Lee* is a poem which describes the curiosity of a little woman. *Peace O’ My Min’* is a deliberate attempt at addressing the issue of peace in two differently appropriated forms of English. The final cento, *Dreamy Realisation* is an intimate poem which deals with feelings of confusion with an attempt to realise the hidden lessons of life.

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LIFE IN TEASPOONS

Let us go then you and I  
Talking of Michelangelo,  
I shall wear the bottoms of my trousers rolled.  
With a bald spot in the middle of my hair  
I am no prophet and here's no great matter.  
I have saved this afternoon for you.  
Lips that would kiss  
Avoid speech of insidious intent  
And the conversation slips.  
Inside my brain a dull tom-tom begins  
Do I dare disturb the universe?  
This is the way the world ends-  
More distant and more solemn.

*All lines in this poem are borrowed from the works of T S Eliot.*

HAIKU

Downpour:

A broken signboard singing

In the flowing stream.

(Raymond Roselip)

(Richard Wright)

(Robert Spiess)

## I, ANNABEL LEE

In this part of the story I am the one who:	(Pablo Neruda)
By the name of ANNABEL LEE,	(Edgar Allan Poe)
Born screaming into this world-	(Spike Milligan)
So various, so beautiful, so new-	(Mathew Arnold)
Devoured her shape with eager, passionate gaze.	(Claude McKay)

## PEACE O' MY MIN'

An' I's feeling kin' o' squeamish in the night	(Harriet Beecher Stowe)
Dey was talkin' in de cabin, dey was talkin' in de hall-	(Harriet Beecher Stowe)
Why world is fighting fighting	(Nissim Ezekiel)
Really, most harassing me!	(Nissim Ezekiel)
Dey's a cu'ious kin' o' shivah runnin' up an' down my back	(Harriet Beecher Stowe)
What you think of prospects of world peace?	(Nissim Ezekiel)
'Cause I don't believe in people allus totin' roun' a frown	(Harriet Beecher Stowe)
It is making me very sad. I am telling you.	(Nissim Ezekiel)

## DREAMY REALISATION

Standing lonely in the sky	(Kamala Das)
Sometimes you want to talk.	(Gauri Deshpande)
You look right at the sky.	(Arun Kolatkar)
And deep in the night, in the clarity of dream,	(Keki Daruwalla)
I am happier to realise you in your lost but similar addresses.	(Dilip Chitre)



## EPISTLE

*Riya Thomas*

Epistles are poems that are written in the form of letters. There is no meter or rhyme requirement for an epistle. Epistle is more a form of voice and persona. It is a freeing form. The term 'Epistle' comes from the Latin word 'epistola' which means letter. It is used to express love, philosophy, religion and morality. It is an Ancient Roman poetic form that appears commonly in the Bible. The letters in the New Testament from the Apostles to Christians are usually referred to as epistles. I chose this at form because there are many portions to play with. First of all it is in the form of a letter. It is also written in free verse. There is no particular rhyme scheme for writing Epistle. The tone is formal. It is also very flexible and one can write a letter from someone else to oneself. The type of letter can vary. It can be a love letter, post card, business letter, sales letter, email or even a text message. It can be written to a real person or to an imaginary person. Also it can be written in one's own voice.

There is no set formula to write a letter poem. The best way is to write down a lot of things to people one would like to talk to; maybe a friend, a parent or maybe even one's computer or pen. It can truly be anything. My collection includes poems like "A Letter to My Saviour, Jesus Christ", "A Letter to a Teacher" and "A Letter to My Friend". All these poems were written in the form of letters. I was least bothered about its rhyme scheme, because there is no need for a meter or rhyme in an epistle. It is also written in free verse. I could write in whatever narration or character I chose. The tone is formal or light-hearted and the content, deep and meaningful. There is no restriction on line length either. I didn't find any problem in writing these poems, because it is in an informal manner that we use in our daily life. I find it very interesting, because of its form. The first poem "A Letter to My Saviour, Jesus Christ" was inspired by a story that I read in the Bible. The rest of the poems are purely from my imagination.

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## A Letter to My Saviour, Jesus Christ

My Saviour,

You were born in a little village  
As the child of an obscure woman.  
You toiled in a carpenter's store  
And took care of the family.

When you reached thirty years old  
You set yourself for a noble cause.

For the three remarkable years  
You were an itinerant teacher.

You never penned anything.  
You never held any posts of honour.  
You never travelled far and wide.

You had nothing to claim as your own.

While still a young man  
The tide of popular opinion  
Turned against you.

At the age of thirty-three  
You were condemned on trumped up charges.

Your friends left you alone and  
One of them denied you ruthlessly.

You were subjected to unjust trial  
In which you were sentenced to death.

They nailed you to a cross  
Between two local thieves.

The only piece of cloth you had  
Was gambled and taken away from you.

Yet, you remained naked before many  
With a dignity that no one could destroy.  
Finally you were laid on the bed of cross  
And you died forgiving your enemies.

The conclusion of your life  
Was the beginning of many lives.  
Many kings have reigned at their best.  
Many scientists and athletes have proven their worth.  
Many heroes have left their legacies.  
Yet none of them can replace you.  
Centuries after centuries have passed by  
But you are the centre of human history.  
My Saviour – yesterday, today and forever!

– From a Believer!

### **A Letter to a Teacher**

Dear Teacher,  
How great are you,  
Infinite is your kindness  
To show God's great glory  
Even to my blindness.  
You are a master potter  
Who sometimes gently chides  
And at times thrashes me  
To bring out the best in me.  
I read many academic books

There would be no world left of me.

In good times, in bad times –

I will be on your side forever more.

You were the one thing I could count on,

Above all, you were my friend.

- From your loving friend



## VENTRILLOQUISM

*Shreya Mahto*

Ventriloquism is a form of art where in the performer uses a dummy and stages a conversation between the dummy and himself in such a manner that it appears as if the voice is coming from the dummy. Ventriloquism is usually performed in front of a live audience and their reaction to the act or performance determines the success or failure of the performer. Hence one gets an immediate feedback. There is an amalgamation of different cultures and traditions; the art form is flexible and can be easily adapted to the concerned culture.

Despite the fact that traditional ventriloquism is performed using a dummy, I made use of a puppet. This was done for the simple reason that in order to learn to use a dummy one requires years of practice and dedication and given the brief period of time it was not possible for her to learn the nuances of it. If an artist chooses to perform ventriloquism using a dummy, it would mean that he/she should know how to sync the eyebrow, lip and eye movements along with the voice which is quite difficult, whereas if one uses a puppet, one only needs to flap the mouth in sync with the voice of the artist. Sounds such as /p/, /b/, /f/ and /w/ are the most difficult to pronounce because one cannot pronounce them without the touch of lips, which mars the effect of ventriloquism. Hence the performer had to appropriate the sentences in such a manner that they make sense while making sure that the lip movements are also not detected.



*Ventriloquism with the puppet, Kermit, by Shreya*

The dialogues had to be learnt by rote so that the fluency in the conversation remains intact and does not hamper the performance in anyway. Each performance had to be practiced in front of a mirror umpteen times before the final delivery could take place.

Through ventriloquism we see the process of 'world'-ing. The script is very westernized, the art form is eastern and the performer is an Indian addressing to an English speaking Indian audience.

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## FAIRY TALES

*Teena George*

Fairy tales, although currently considered to be a part of children's literature, were originally meant for an audience of adults. They were initially narrated or enacted, and many tales have been lost over time. Also, due to the lack of proper written records, it is difficult to pin down the origin of fairy tales to particular countries. However, the category, as we know it today, came into being through the works of Giambattista Basile, Francesco Straparola, the Grimm brothers, Charles Perrault, Hans Christian Andersen, and others. It was not until the 17th century that such stories were christened “contes de fees” by Madame d’Aulnoy.

The fairy tale became popular among the preieuses of France between 1690 and 1710. The Grimm brothers, Jacob and Wilhelm, collected German folk tales and re-wrote them, making them more acceptable to the public. The work of the Brothers Grimm, in rejecting those tales that were not indisputably German, inspired others to, in a spirit of romantic nationalism, collect fairy tales that they believed were representative of their nation's culture. It was around the same time that Hans Christian Andersen continued the literary tradition of fairy tales.

Today, several writers resort to the form of fairy tales for a variety of reasons. Some wish to look at the human condition in the simple framework provided by fairy tales, while others merely wish to add an element of the fantastic into contemporary discourse. Some writers even adapted the older tales to fit the modern context. Some writers have retold stories, giving them twists, to add to the comic content. Consider, for example, Roald Dahl's *Revolting Rhymes*, in which he retold a selection of fairy tales, with unexpected twists in place.

Several fairy tales have been adapted to film and television, the most notable adaptations being by Disney. Some film-makers have gone on to make modern-day adaptations of these stories. Comics and animated television shows have come up with titles, such as *Princess Tutu* and *Sandman*. Fairy tales have also been appropriated in the field of music, with artists - The Decemberists, Sara Bareilles, and Faith Hill, etc. - using fairy tale characters in their songs.

In *The Platinum Bracelet*, what I have sought to do was to create a fairy tale, following the process that Hans Christian Andersen did - borrowing a folk tale and then adapting it. The story is an attempt at critiquing certain practices of society, through exaggerated characters and actions, as well as appealing to the child in the adult, as Roald Dahl did, through the use of satire.

*The Platinum Bracelet* is meant to be a critique on the upper class of society, which generally seems to have money as the driving force behind any decision they make. The story also looks at the loss of innocence suffered by almost all city-dwellers at some point of their life, irrespective of their social standing, causing

even the most idealistic of all men to bow down to greed, as did the milkman's son.

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### **The Platinum Bracelet**

There was once a very rich businessman who lived in a swank, seven-bedroom penthouse apartment with his second wife and the daughter from his first marriage. The father had, interestingly, been on the cover of Forbes magazine quite a few times in the past three years. He had so much money that, according to rumors that were making their way around the city, he had a bucket full of money, which his servants used as kitchen towels to wipe food and water stains off the kitchen counter, and well as the dining table after each meal.

On the girl's twenty-first birthday, her father gave her a platinum bracelet that he had gifted her mother at some point in their marriage, and that he had retained custody of, in the hope that he could gift it out to someone else. You see, he did not get this rich by spending his money unnecessarily. However, he did try to reuse, reduce and recycle purchases. The girl, you can imagine, was thrilled with the beautiful gift. One can only assume she knew nothing about how it used to belong to her mother who was, at the moment, in some up-market rehabilitation centre at the other end of the country, fighting an addiction to drugs for the seventh time that year. In the businessman's opinion, he paid too much alimony.

Before her pool-party was to begin, the girl decided to go to the mall and spend some of her father's money (for she had no job of her own). She called a few friends of hers and her chauffeur drove them on over in the Audi. Now, exactly what they did at the mall is immaterial. But, if you must know, they walked a bit, ate a bit, drank a milkshake and bought lots and lots of new clothes for the birthday girl – all paid for by credit card, of course. Want to know a secret, though? The girl never wore any of those clothes. Rather, she hung them up in her closet for years. And then, when she had to get rid of some of her clothes to make room for all her shoes, she decided to use them to fuel the fire in the grate in her room.

On the way back, the girls decided to walk home – an experience that was entirely new to the young girl, who was so used to being chauffeur-driven everywhere. She was not even used to opening the door of the car to get in and out of it! Anyway, while the girls were walking, they were mugged. While all the others knew they were to run, the rich girl had never even seen a poor person before (her protective bubble was that tight around her), and she stayed behind in curiosity, to see what he wanted. “Give me all your money!” Roared the mugger, his hoodie hiding most of his face. “But I don't have any.” said the girl. “I have a credit card, though.”

The mugger pulled back the hood of the jacket and growled at her through pearly-white teeth. “I can't use plastic!” The girl quivered in fear now. For, standing before her, was a tiger. She screamed and tried to make a dash for it. The tiger grabbed hold of her arm and his claw got snagged in her bracelet. The girl got jerked back, and the clasp of the bracelet came undone. She ducked and ran out of the alley as fast as she could, and ran all the way home.

Now, this tiger was an old tiger, and his teeth and claws had lost their sharpness. His strength and stamina were no longer what they used to be. What he had dreaded all his life had finally happened – he had become too old to hunt or food any more. He lay outside his cave, awaiting Death, when a crow came in and told him about the city and how it was full of people with lots of money, and about how, once you have money, you don't need to worry about hunting for food, because there are people foolish enough to give you food for a few pieces of paper. The tiger expressed his gratitude by killing the bird quickly and painlessly, and then gobbled him up, before he began to pack his belongings and make his way to the city (taking several rest stops on the way), where he learned to sleep in those large green garbage bins that are at the end of streets, and to get money from people without having to say “please” and “thank you”. After the birthday girl had run away so unceremoniously, after giving him nothing, the tiger was not happy at all. He growled and roared at the wall in front of him, to vent his frustration. He was about to turn and go find another person who would give him some money so he may go buy meat, when the sunlight reflected off something shiny on the floor and into his eye. He bent down as far as his back would let him, and squatted the rest of the way, until he could reach the bracelet to pick it up. “Chunky noodles?” he thought, putting it into his mouth and trying to chew it. But, it was so hard, it made his weak teeth ache. “Maybe not,” he said, pulling it out, wiping it on his jacket and then pocketing it. “Maybe I can use it for something, eventually.”

When they got back home, the girls told the businessman what had happened. He was very upset. “I am so glad that tiger did not eat you the minute he first saw you. For the bracelet would then have been lost forever. Now that you know what he looks like, we can track him down and get the bracelet back.” So the business man got his secretary to get the best detectives in town on the phone. The businessman spoke to them briefly – what was said, nobody knows, because the business man took the call in his study, and it was impossible to eavesdrop through the heavy oak door. “They'll be right here.” He announced to his daughter. When the detectives arrived, they took the daughter into the study and had her answer a few questions about the incident with the tiger. Meanwhile, just to be sure he got the bracelet back (detectives tend to sit behind big desks, and wait until whatever they were supposed to find found them), the businessman called a Press conference and told the members of the Press – the people with the flashing cameras and empty notepads – about what had happened to his daughter earlier that day. He also showed them pictures of the bracelet, and told them that he was offering a reward for anybody who could find the bracelet and return it to him. “And, what is the reward?” asked one of the people with a Press badge. “Well,” said the business man, thinking hard. He did



not want to part with money or riches willingly. He thought of his daughter – aye, she would do nicely. Besides, it would save him a lot of trouble. “Well, he can marry my daughter. As my only heir, she stands to inherit all of my estate once I'm gone.” The cameras started clicking like crazy, then.

The whole thing appeared on the front page of the early edition of the newspaper the next morning, and many mothers sent their eligible young sons to go and try to retrieve the bracelet. After all, who did not want a rich daughter-in-law. So, it came to be that there were several men buzzing on the businessman's intercom that morning, and the butler showed each and every one of them into the study, where the business man would have a talk with each of them to deem whether they were capable enough to go in search of the bracelet, and to marry his daughter, eventually.

Now, the girl was in love with the milkman's boy. It did not bother her at all that he had hardly any money of his own, because she would have enough for not only the both of them, but to build a huge manor for the old lady in the shoe and all her children, giving them a room each, and one just for the shoe, itself. She sent her personal assistant shopping, in order to get some fine clothes for the milkman's boy, so that he may be presentable when he goes to meet her father. The assistant came back an hour later (the traffic was horrible) with a lovely three-piece suit, as well as a shirt and tie and shoes to match.

The next day, the milkman's son found himself join the ranks of the many people who were roaming the streets in search of a tiger in man's clothing. Interestingly, he was the only one with enough sense to wait outside the pawn shop to see if the tiger would try to pawn the bracelet. Sure enough, the tiger turned up. Well, actually, he walked right past the milkman's son who, if he hadn't caught sight of the striped tail, would have let him continue walking away. He grabbed the poor tiger by the tail and half-dragged, half-walked him down an alley.

Twenty minutes later, the tiger was seen running out of the alley, his hood pulled down low over his face. Let's just say that age, strength and stamina were on the side of the milkman's son. He stood there, his back to the wall that blocked off the alley. He held the bracelet in his hand. It was small and delicate, with diamonds tastefully powdered along it. He held it up to the light and looked at it. Now, all he needed to do was to walk back to the businessman's apartment, and hand it over, and he would be allowed to marry the daughter. “I'll have a big apartment, and a room all to myself.” he thought. “I'll have a chauffeur to drive me everywhere, and a servant just to flush my toilet for me. But,” he said, his face falling, “I'll have to spend the rest of my life trying to keep her happy, or else, she'll get one of her fancy, overpaid lawyers to sue me for every paise I get from marrying her...” And thus began his long, unpleasant list of “I shall have to”s. With each successive thought, he began to feel worse. He weighed the bracelet in his hand, tossed it up in the air and caught it a couple of times. He then pocketed it and headed for the nearest pawn shop.



## RUSSIAN FOLKLORE

*Joseph Mathew*

Russian folklore is a manner of telling stories, which blends the human and the supernatural. It was popularized by the Slavs – early inhabitants of Russia – whose superstitious beliefs are believed to be the basis for Russian folklore. Eminent scholars have proved that Russian folklore is an art form, which comes under the genre of fairy tales. Russian folklore is characteristic of Eastern Europe (which includes Latvia, Estonia and Poland).

In Estonian folklore, animals play a pivotal role, with the animals often conversing with human beings. One major element of Russian folklore is the Bylina. Bylina is, essentially, epic poetry in the oral tradition, generally chronicling the acts of kings. It was a prominent form during the 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> century, during the time of Kievan. Bylina is further classified into the older and younger forms, the older dealing with supernatural elements, while the younger deals with human elements. As communism began to replace the form of government followed in Russia, popularity of folklore waned. It continued to decline until the time of Josef Stalin's regime. Folklore began to incorporate Marxist elements, paving the way for Soviet Nationalism. In 1953, with the death of Stalin, the growth of folklore in Russia was stunted once more. Scholars, however, are currently attempting to bring back Russian folklore through the revival of ancient epics.

The story I did is the story of an honest farmer and a wicked fox. I wrote the folklore based on the present context of aggression and annexation. The farmer represents the exploited subject whereas the wicked fox represents the State. The story looks at the forceful annexation of wealth of the common man by the State. Coming to the structure of the story, I used Bylina, from a different perspective. The only change I have put into effect in my reproduction of the art form, was transpositioning of the oral element for written poetry. Another prominent element is the characterization. Here I choose fox and farmer because to convey the message of the story in the context of reality. Characterization acts as a catalyst to convey the message of the story. Drawbacks of the story can be seen in terms of the dialogues, as Bylina does not, generally, have any

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## The Story of an Honest Farmer and Wicked Fox

In a certain region there lived a humble and a honest farmer named Pavlov. He was honest in his works. As the sun rises he goes to field and works on and on. He was assisted by his sons who were devoted to their father's work. Due to his dint hard work he rose to the position of prominence. He is now the wealthiest person of that region. The king called him once and paid him respect in the form of granting land and conferring an honorary title of minister and hence he became the most influential person. Everyone in that region loved him and cared much for him, for he is a philanthropist, except one the Fox, who is cunning, jealous and also loyal to the enemies of that region. Fox wanted to see him decline and thus, begins his acts. One day, when his sons went for harvest the old farmer was alone in the home and the fox came planning to tackle him and his fortune. The Fox said

“Master, master! How precious you are...

Therefore I am a humble fox who has no one

Please my master, grant me a small job

Job of a guardian, therefore am I obliged

The farmer replied,

So coming from nowhere

Sympathy of mine will not let me to

Send you away..

My heart says you are my guardian.”

Fox succeeded in his initial attempt. Within short span of time he became a loyal guard of the farmer and the farmer blindly believed him. This made fox easy to interfere in his personal affairs. One day he stole the grains and distributed to the other regions especially to the enemy. The wealth gradually began to decrease still the farmer especially to the enemy. The wealth gradually began to decrease still the farmer trusted fox. The farmer once loved his sons but now cares for fox. He even suspects his children and ousts them. The fox drained all the wealth when the farmer was alone. Old man gradually became weak ass he is alone. Once he asked to fox to take care of him but fox refused and said

“O you old man, how foolish you are?

Old man, you are alone

you are nullified. You are now nowhere

I am now so it's my privilege

to oust you.

You are just a residue

Good for nothing.

Old farmer wept:

I plead you, you are like

my faithful ; son.

Come, come close to me

*MORAL OF THE STORY:* Do not think from your  
heart, think from your brain. Think practically.



## TRIOLET

***Ginny Liya Raj***

Triolet is an eight lined poem, which originated in France in the thirteenth century. Patrick Carey, the seventeenth century Benedictine monk wrote the earliest Triolets. It is Robert Bridges who introduced Triolet into English language. Triolet is a short poem in which the beauty lies in the repetitive lines and in the rhyming scheme. In this form of poetry, the first line is repeated in the fourth and seventh lines and second line is repeated in the eighth line. The rhyming scheme of Triolet is ABaAabAB wherein the capital letters indicate the repetition. Triolet has a close resemblance with Rondeau poetry which also emphasises on the repetition of lines and on the rhyming scheme. The themes of these short poems vary from light or humorous to serious and melancholic.

The main purpose of every art is to entertain and to help the writer to express his/her emotions. Through the art form Triolet, one can entertain one's readers and can express one's emotions and thoughts. The one who writes Triolets can use any theme according to one's wish. There is no particular rule to select the theme, which is one of the main advantages of Triolet poems. Writing Triolets was quite challenging for me since I had to stick on to the repetitive lines and the rhyming schemes without losing the connection between the lines and the meaning. Also through the limited lines the entire idea had to be conveyed. However, Triolet is one of the best forms of poetry which can communicate the poet's emotions and thoughts with the readers.

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### Love is God

Love is God and God is in all.

Love is after all the fragrance

That spreads with the least fall.

Love is God and God is in all.

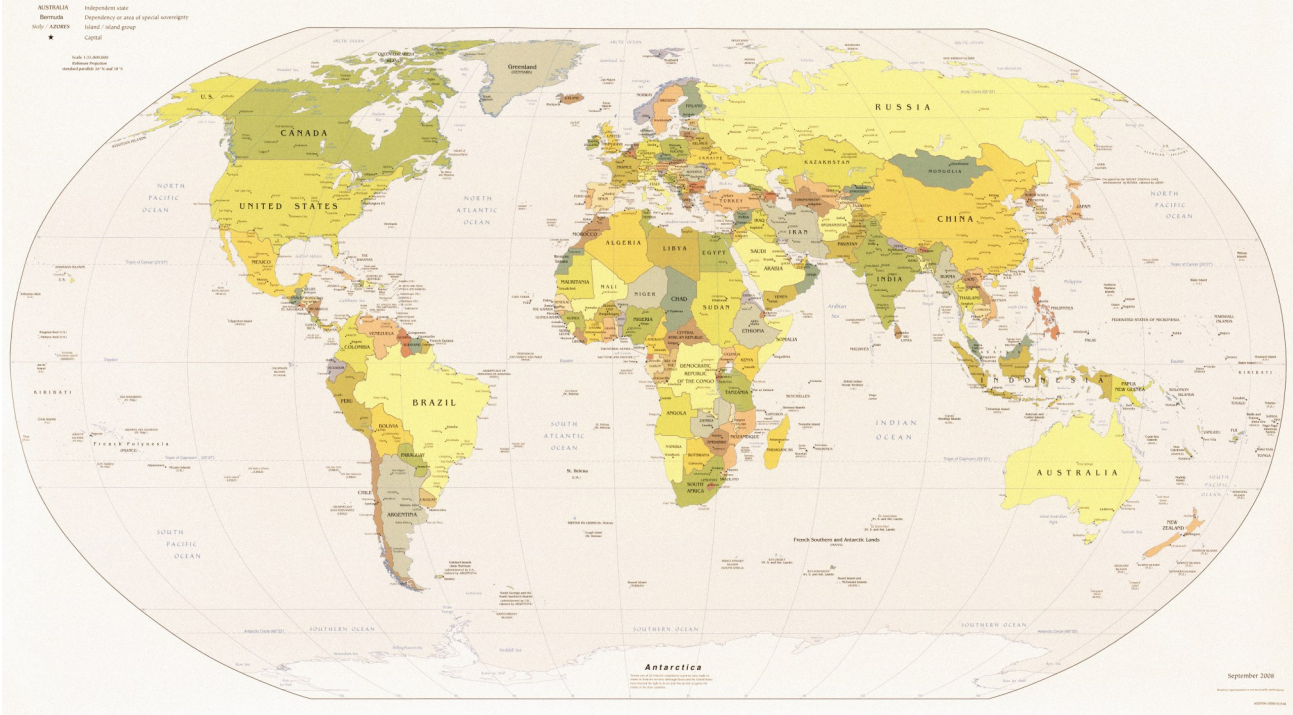
Love is the essence of every soul

Imprinted in the heart of each one.

Love is God and God is in all.

Love is after all the fragrance.

Political Map of the World, September 2008



B E Y O N D   B O R D E R S

# I N T R O D U C T I O N

*Radhika Shenoy*

This section mainly deals with art forms that have varying origins and have currently been appropriated by the Popular Culture. Graffiti is, essentially, the expression of one's thoughts and ideas in a creative manner, using spray paint or graffiti markers. Graffiti is commonly seen on the streets of New York where teenagers and young adults “Tag” their names on walls. The Cha Cha is considered to be one of the top five internationally recognised Latin American dances, according to the Latin American Ballroom Association. It is considered to be one of the most dominant 'pop' rhythms over the past half-century. Six word stories is a form of micro fiction that gained prominence with Ernest Hemingway's “Baby shoes for sale. Never worn.” They involve telling an entire story using only six words. Finger puppetry is the art of manipulation of a puppet using one's fingers. The puppets assume characters in a story narrated by the Puppeteer. It is an art form derive from ancient parts of theatre. Reading Tarot Cards is an art form that uses cards to solve various problems in life, as well as to tell the future. It feeds of human curiosity and need to know the unknown. Contemporary Gospel Music looks at music that expresses personal, spiritual, or a communal belief regarding Christian life. The style is believed to have evolved from Christian hymns and originates from the African slaves who settled in the American subcontinent. Thus, this amalgamation of different cultures is an important section this book that mainly aims to dissolve boundaries.



## GRAFFITI

*Diana Joseph*

Graffiti art is an art form of self-expression, where the artist expresses his/her true feelings through creativity. The origins of graffiti go back to the beginning of human, societal living. Graffiti has been found on uncovered, ancient, Egyptian monuments and was even preserved on the walls in Pompeii. Graffiti is the plural form of the Italian word “grafficar” which means drawings, markings, patterns, scribbles or messages that are painted, written or carved on a wall or surface. Modern graffiti art began in the late 1960’s in New York City, when teens used permanent markers to tag or write their names and hence it is known as “New York Style” graffiti. Graffiti is not mere drawings or painting. It has particular techniques and styles. Graffiti can be created by using both spray paint and graffiti markers.

The major challenge I faced was that it was my first attempt at painting. I have used graffiti markers for the production. The graffiti style used is known as “tagging” which is one of the earliest forms of modern graffiti. “Tagging” is a style where the artist writes his/her name in a unique fashion using particular font to show his/her presence in the particular place. The name of the artist is written in the graffiti font known as “bubble letters” and is designed in “wild-style”. In the production, I have tried to express myself through various emoticons. My behavioural characteristics are portrayed using various smileys which signify the emotions happy, sad, anger, bored, excited and loving nature.

The colours used in the production are black, white, red, green and yellow. These colours give meaning to all emoticons. Black stands for the hidden mind of the artist, while white stands for the character of the artist as how it is perceived by others. Red signifies warmth, life, passion, lust and heat, thereby denoting the loving as well as short tempered nature of the artist. Green, being the most restful colour, symbolizes self-respect and well being. If my self-respect is affected, I would be sad and hence, have green for sadness and boring. Yellow projects activeness and alertness of mind, giving a sense of establishment. Clear light yellow clears the mind, making it active and alert. This factor makes me happy and excited, and the use of yellow colour is to reflect these emotions

The name of an individual signifies his/ her identity. The name “Diana” gives identity to me as an artist. I have tried as an artist, to express my character through the production using various emoticons. In short, “Diana” is happy, sad, loving, boring, and short-tempered and excited individual and these emotions contribute to my character as an artist. The production helps others to understand the behavior of the artist and also provides aesthetic pleasure. Each techniques, style and colour contributes it to make it a world art.



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*Graffiti produced by Diana*



## CHA CHA

*Jordanna Drego*

The Latin American Ballroom Association considers the Cha Cha to be one of the top five internationally recognized and danced Latin American dances. It became widely popular in 1954 thanks to the efforts of Monsieur Pierre Zurcher-Margolle and his scintillating partner Doris Lavelle. It has the distinction of being one of the most dominant 'pop' rhythms for the last 40 to 50 years.

Reputed to be the dance of flirtation and mystery, the history behind the dance form is also shrouded in its very own mystery. Several theories were propounded as to how this dance actually originated, but the most widely accepted theory is that it was derived from its two sister dance forms; the Mambo and the Swing. It came to be known as the 'Triple Mambo'. Eventually due to the distinct sound that was emitted while performing the 'chasse' which is a step that is predominantly performed throughout the dance it came to be known as the 'Cha Cha'. Some people also refer to it as the 'Cha Cha Cha' due to the shuffling of the feet during the 'chasse' step, which follows the syncopated beats inherently apart of the Cha Cha music. This dance has transcended time and space and has become a global phenomenon and has been incorporated by various cultures around the world including mine.

The process of proving that the Cha Cha; which is an internationally recognized dance form, is an art form was more challenging than I initially anticipated. Learning intricate nuances that were associated with this dance enabled me to get a comprehensive idea of the dance. However, difficulties endured in creating this video were not negated by this.

The first obstacle stemmed from the lack of a dance partner in Bangalore which is a critical requirement. With luck, I found an appropriate dance partner soon. Rehearsals proved to be a balancing act along with hectic CIA submissions as well as finding the time to have a decent rehearsal. Once the video was completed, I was able to observe from an objective standpoint and was able to derive a subjective meaning from the video. It was able to show the attire that was appropriated by the dancers of this form in two separate forums, those that were worn by the street dancers and those that were worn in formal avenues e.g. ballroom competitions. Thus, giving the attire worn in the video a more holistic framework.

In order to do justice to the dance I had to incorporate lifts and dips into the routine which was something that I wasn't entirely well versed with. Overcoming the initial obstacles, appropriating the Cha Cha did not prove to be difficult to perform. This particular dance form has become a global phenomenon, yet the true difficulty that I faced was that there was limited literature available on this art form. Whatever little

information gathered, was from varied dance studio websites giving their interpretation of the history of this dance. Thus, as I discovered this field is ripe for further analysis and it would be highly beneficial if extensive research would be conducted in this particular genre of art.

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*Cha Cha demonstration by Jordana*



## SIX WORD STORIES

Nitya Santosh

Six Word Stories is located under the umbrella term micro fiction which includes all possible forms of very short fiction. Micro fiction has historical precedents in Japan, China and even Europe. Japanese art forms like *haibun* (of which a *haiku* is a part) and the more contemporary version of it, *ketai* fiction, are precedents to very short fiction in Japan. *Ketai* fiction refers to stories long enough to fit a text message. These are also popular in other parts of the world as ‘mobile-phone fiction’ or ‘thumb novels’. There are also other versions like palm-sized story, minute-long story, and smoke-long story which are popular in China. Seasoned forms of fiction such as *anecdotes*, *fables* and *parables* can also be said to have influenced micro fiction; they may themselves be considered as part of the genre. Micro fiction seems a very ultra-modern genre because of its increasing visibility in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Its presence on a page is so striking that one can’t but take notice.

Ernest Hemmingway’s often quoted six-word story – For sale: baby shoes, never worn – is an example of micro fiction from even before the genre was named so. In spite of its meagre word count, the story has a clear and definite narrative. From this story was inspired the *Six-Word Memoirs* – a project founded by the U.S.-based online storytelling magazine, *Smith Magazine*. They brought out four books in this series. Apart from the *Smith Magazine*’s project, Hemmingway’s story also gave way to the website [www.sixwordstories.net](http://www.sixwordstories.net), which was launched in 2008.

The brevity of Six Word Stories appealed to me the most. To be able to tell a tale in six words, and make one sit and ponder about the tale, is truly an art. Though brief, these carry a definite narrative. What Six Word Stories do is much like the *haibun* – it records a scene or a special moment in an objective manner or in a wholly dream like space. It follows a certain structure; the syllable count in a *haiku* is like the word count in these stories. It may seem effortless; to just string six words together, but to pick the right words and make a narrative of it is no easy task. My attempt was to produce stories of my own. I chose to write about my life, seven stories that would talk of 21 years of my life. I also tried to experiment with typography, fonts and images.

In the first two, I experimented with my choice of colour, images, and fonts. Some colours have obvious connotations, others add a personal touch. The third story is one of my favorites, which is the essential doll-house, fairy tale life that every girl dreams of. The house in the image is drawn using the word ‘hoped’ to show a house built on hope, and a road that leads to the ‘always’. The next two stories are about the growing up years and of a teenager’s crushes and love interests. The final two stories are extremely personal. One about the time spent at my dance classes, when I truly understood my love for dancing. The next is a reflection of my spiritual life, when I came to the Lord and was saved. I did not want these stories to mean

just one thing, but have multiple interpretations. Any reader unaware of the writer should be able to make sense of it. Six Word Stories is truly a form of world art to me because of the fact that though they are personal, they appeal to readers universally. Without losing its individualistic identity, Six Word Stories present itself to a world audience.

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## MY STORIES

"Baby girl," said she, smiled he.

Tiny bag. Few books. New life.

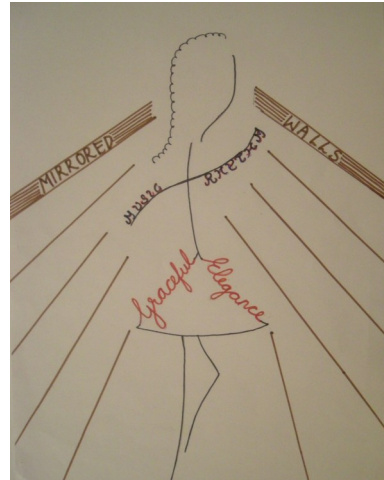
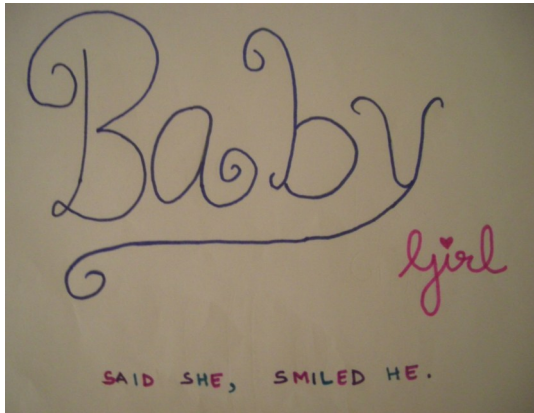
Played it, dreamt too... Hoped, always!

Lead to ink; felt grown up.

Fell in love... Many, many times.

Mirrored walls. Music, rhythm. Graceful elegance.

Touched by grace. Saved through faith.



*Pictorial Representation of Six Word Stories by Nitya Santosh*

## FINGER PUPPETRY

*Sowparnika*

A puppet is an inanimate object or representational figure animated or manipulated by a puppeteer. The puppeteer may be visible to or hidden from the audience. A puppeteer can operate a puppet indirectly by the use of strings, rods, wires, and electronics or directly by his or her own hands placed inside the puppet or holding it externally. Some puppet styles like the Japanese *Bunraku* require puppeteers to work together as a team to create a single puppet character. It derives from ancient parts of theatre which involves story-telling. There are many different varieties of puppets, and they are made of a wide range of materials, depending on their form and intended use. They can be extremely complex or very simple in their construction. They can even be created out of the everyday objects. Puppetry caters to audience of all ages unlike the popular notion that it's only a part of children's theatre. Some well-known examples are European glove puppets, multi-stringed marionettes of Burma and Thailand, the snake puppets of *Hopi* ritual dramas, the shadow puppets of the Malayo-Indonesian world, the rod puppets of western Africa, *Kathputli* from Rajasthan, India and the Japanese *Bunraku*. It's difficult to trace the origin of puppetry due to the lack of evidence and sufficient proof. Puppetry has masked the entire world and is believed to have thrived since 3000 BC. However it has undergone evolution since its beginning and contemporary forms of puppetry continue to thrive thanks to media and its influence.

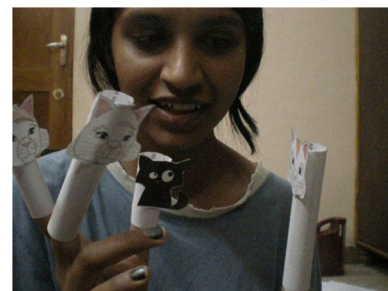
The form of puppetry under discussion is *finger puppetry* which is believed to be a contemporary style since there's a lack of evidence about its origins. It is assumed that it can be traced back to the oral history when nannies and mothers used to put the children to sleep using the finger puppets. The drawback of this form of theatre is that, it cannot be used for a larger audience since there is no use of stage or miniature theatre, also the size of the puppets, which are only small enough to fit one's fingers, is another factor that confines its audience. Also there's not much movement and involvement of props as it's difficult to move or carry them around. Nevertheless, finger puppets are a great way to involve children into puppetry, which gives way to the option of personalising puppets catering to the needs.

Finger puppets are relatively easy to make in comparison to the other forms of puppets. Considering it was my first attempt, I consumed more time than needed, I had decided the characters beforehand, formed a story line and then practiced it once in front of mirror before directly videotaping it. There was no fixed story line my intention was to get the experience of telling the story spontaneously and even changing the course of plot if required. I also made sure that the story had moral endings since this form of puppetry has children as the primary audience. The story had mainly animal characters and I had to change my voice and tone accordingly and also add background noise if required. I found the experience a little nerve-wrecking and the

pressure of creating and changing the story on the spot was huge since the audience was fictitious. Finger puppetry nonetheless has many advantages, although it cannot be used in a formal theatrical set-up. The reach and adaptations of this form of puppetry is far and wide which cuts across gender, nations, race, political and economic status. Hence finger puppetry can arguably be considered as a World Art Form.

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*The Finger-puppet family of cats, the alien, and the cow by Sowparnika*





## TAROT READING

*Tania Tomar*

Tarot is a set of playing cards that originated in the mid 15th century in various parts of Europe. There is no set origin of Tarot cards. Some believe it rests somewhere in the gypsy culture, whereas others believe that the beginning was in Italy, The belief that the Origins of the Tarot was in Egypt continued till late 1850's, when the "gypsies" became popular. The tarot card deck consists of about 78 cards with the minor Arcana including 56 cards and the major Arcana including 22 cards. Each card in the deck is highly symbolic in nature and though it was used for the purpose of future prediction in the beginning, the use of tarot cards has increased lately. It is used for therapy, self development and finding the purpose of one's life. The tarot cards were initially used as playing cards, and later developed into a set of magical cards for predicting future. They were also called "miracle cards" since they were used for solving various problems of life. Over the centuries, these magical cards have been popularised worldwide with the production of movies based on clairvoyance such as *beyond the door three*. These cards have gained immense popularity for the past 30 years, mainly due to people's desire to know the unknown, this curiosity to foresee the unknown, has made tarot cards popular till date.

Tarot card learning is an art, which can only be learnt through constant practice, for a beginner, it is important that he or she needs to choose the right deck of cards, although there is no hard and fast rule to what kind of deck one chooses, one could still refer to the  *rider waite* tarot deck for guidance, which is easily available in any bookstore. Since time immemorial, the tarot card reader has the freedom to choose whichever deck one prefers however it is advisable that one uses the set with which one feels connected to. For an amateur to decide which deck to choose he /she needs to hold the cards, feel them, and if they feel the cards speaking to them, then the deck is right. The second step involves reading the cards and before one begins to read he/she must ensure that the environment is peaceful so that the reader could concentrate. While performing, it is necessary for the reader to always be positive and give answers positively to the subject. The most common problem which the beginner faces is that of learning the meaning of each card. In order to do this one needs to learn the meanings of all cards and then sit down and analyze the pictures on them, try to connect the picture with the meaning one has learnt and then one will be able to understand the cards. The other difficult thing is to decide which spread to choose while performing, i.e whether to choose the tree of life or Celtic spread. If in doubt, the reader should focus on the intensity and the depth of the question asked, and the spread can be decided accordingly. In order to be a good reader, one must always love and respect the chosen deck of cards which in turn calls for a lot of practice. The most intrinsic feature of tarot card reading is to be positive while delivering the reading to the client, no matter how bad the situation is, and provide apt

solutions instead of scaring him/her with the impending problems. Tarot card reading is an art ,that can be learnt with practice. Remember you do not need any sort of mystical power for reading the cards can be read by anybody as long as one learns it .

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*A Tarot Reading Session by Tania Tomar*

## CONTEMPORARY GOSPEL MUSIC

*Angelin Sanchez*

Music is a very powerful medium and in some societies there have been attempts to control its use. It is powerful at the level of the social group, because it facilitates communication which goes beyond words, enables meaning to be shared, and promotes the development and maintenance of individual, group, cultural and national identities. The most influential factor is the impact of music upon people, regardless of their religion, caste and background.

Gospel music is the music that is written to express personal, spiritual or a communal belief regarding Christian life, as well as to give a Christian alternative to mainstream secular music.

Like other forms of Christian music, the creation, performance, significance, and even the definition of gospel music varies according to cultures and their social context. Gospel music is composed and performed for many purposes, including aesthetic pleasure, religious or ceremonial purposes, and as an entertainment product for the marketplace.

Though it gained mainstream popularity in the 1800s, the Gospel culturally evolved only in the first quarter of the twentieth century. The Style evolved from Christian hymns and originates from the African slaves who settled in the American subcontinent.

Typically, the instruments used are Vocals, piano, organ, guitar, drums and bass guitar. The present derivative forms are Country, rhythm, blues and soul. The Subgenres are urban contemporary gospel and Southern gospel. The Fusion genre is Christian country music. Protestant hymns and African-American spirituals make up the basic material for traditional black gospel music, which in turn is the most significant source of urban contemporary gospel, which keeps the spiritual focus of the traditional black gospel music, while also using modern musical forms.

I have attempted to compose a 'blues' song, which is a type of vocal style. The instrumental music is based on the use of blues notes or blending of scalar tone on a repetitive pattern, which is usually a twelve bar structure. This gives the blues their characteristic melody and harmony. My art form is the Modern Gospel Music, in the acapella style.

I have added some of the 'hip-hop' style to the traditional Gospel blues music, in order to give a new life to it. It might be difficult to completely understand the song's meaning, especially if one is listening to it for the first time; and also if one is unfamiliar with the characteristics of the gospel.

Inspired by the Holy Bible and the beautiful creation of God, man and woman, I have written the lines ‘by two hearts and two faces of a coin’. Rhythm and music must go hand in hand and music has to be blended and synchronize just as ghee and banana blends. This is the most important and the most challenging part. While composing a hip-hop style song can be easy, actually singing what you have composed is a herculean task.

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### **Angelin’s Song**

Jehovah here in your presence (2)

God made two hearts

Two faces of a coin (2)

They are flying (2)

They are flying without wings

With no sorrows

A happy family (2)

Yo listen listen what I say

How I wonder you’re my friend

Savior savior of my life

The only forgotten son

The God of Abraham

The God of Isaac

The God of Jacob

Jesus Christ is my friend

(God made two.....)

When I think about my past days

You lifted me with your Grace (2)

With no sorrows

A happy family (2)

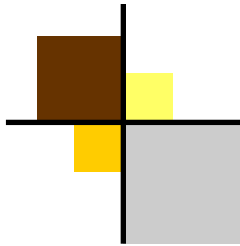
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